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SUPER PLAY

ISSUE 5

MARCH 1993

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- Jaki Crush Super Pinball
- Rushing Beat Run
- Caveman Ninja 2
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- CD ROM UPDATE
- ALL THE NEWS FROM LAS VEGAS CES!

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Super Play

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Future PUBLISHING

SUPER PLAY EDITORIAL

FROM THE BIG CHAIR

THE HOTTEST ISSUE YET!

Our full contents listing starts just over the page

Welcome to *Super Play*. Or rather, I should say 'welcome back!' to all our regular readers, and a big 'hi, glad you could join us' to all you newies. By common consent last issue was the best *Super Play* yet, but I've got my fingers crossed for this one too.

So, what've we got this issue? Well, new game releases may have slowed down on other systems after the Christmas rush, but not on Super Nintendo – there's a whole bundle of new grey import games from America and Japan on sale this month, and the official UK releases are picking up in pace too.

Most spectacular of this month's new games is the excellent new NCS Masiya/Konami robot blast-'em-up, known as either *Assault Suits Valken* or *Cybernator*. We've got the game on this month's fab Wil Overton cover, and a giant review on page 30. Hot on its heels in the fabness stakes is the brilliantly cute *Tiny Toon Adventures*, while other newies like *Jaki Crush Super Pinball* and *Super Volley 2* keep the import game standard high. On the official front there're excellent releases like *Jimmy Connors Pro Tennis Tour*, *Mario Paint*, *Parodius* and *Prince Of Persia* this month too.

Elsewhere in the magazine we compare and contrast rival cheat cartridges Game Genie and Action Replay (page 18), review the brilliant new Hudsonsoft four-player adaptor (page 56), and look at the real future of Nintendo CD and other hot stuff (page 40).

Finally, due to lots of boring financial factors, as of next issue we'll be taking a modest price rise to £2.25. I hope you'll agree this is still good value for the best SNES magazine in Europe, or (indeed) the English language. The good news, however, is that to sweeten the pill we're going to be giving just about the snazziest free gift ever away with the April issue. What is it? A-ha! That'd be telling. Till next month!

Matt Bielby

Editor

INDEPENDENT SUPER NINTENDO MAGAZINE
SUPER PLAY

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The greatest news section in any console mag!

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This January saw America hold its Winter Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, where all the year's hot games were on show, many for the first time. We went along to check out the sights, and our full report begins here, including the first proper details of the very first Super F/X game, *Star Fox*! If you're interested in the future of Super NES games, this is one you simply can't afford to miss...

Winter CES '93: it was the greatest console show on earth, and *Super Play* was there!

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Five players on one game – simultaneously! 56

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Super Multitap: five-player fun for all the family!

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A Bee Team Production

onsole show

the family!

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IMPORT REVIEWS

We've got 12 import games reviewed this month – and they're merely the vanguard of a great surge of new games planned for the first half of this year, many of which are listed in our Las Vegas show report (page 38). Without a doubt the biggest game is this month's coverstar, *Assault Suits Valken* (known as *Cybernator* in the US, and probably to be released under that title in this country soon). A fabulous platform shoot-'em-up, it's a worthy successor to past Konami platform greats like *Super Probotector* et al. *Valken* isn't the only great import game we've got for you though – *Tiny Toon Adventures* is just as fab, and then there's *Kikikaikai* (known as *Pocky & Rocky* in America), *Jaki Crush Super Pinball*, *Super Volley II*...

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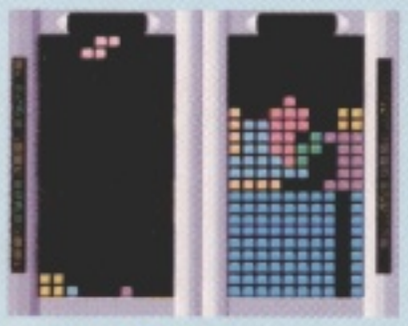

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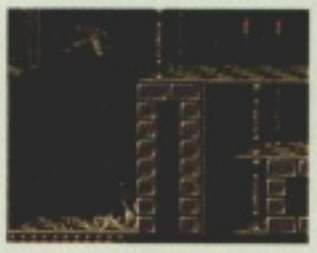

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SUPER EXP

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Nintendo Health

THE POST-CHRISTMAS BACKLASH STARTS HERE!

Daily Mail
The shocking pric
NINTENDO FACE
HEALTH STORM
THE Sun 25p
NINTENDO KILLED MY SON
I would tell every parent not to buy these games for kids.

The Sun and the *Daily Mail*: leading the current outbreak of Nintendo epilepsy scare stories. Ironically, this very same edition of *The Sun* carried a four page computer games pull-out inside!

By all accounts, Nintendo had an excellent Christmas – sales were strong, with many stores running out of Super NES packs and being forced to turn punters away. However, success has its problems – one of which is a post-Christmas spate of video game scare stories, nearly all of them focusing on Nintendo.

Anti-Nintendo stories generally take three forms. The first is that Nintendo operate a near-monopoly, allowing them to charge unfair prices. (Obviously, this can be *good* news – anything that encourages cheaper prices has to be applauded.) The second is that the violence in many Nintendo games – mainly shoot-'em-ups – encourages aggressive behaviour in real life. Well, maybe so, maybe not – it seems likely that this is one we'll be arguing over for ages.

The third scare, however, is potentially the most damaging to our gameplaying – that Nintendo can actually *harm* you. And this is the one that's screamed from the front of the papers recently. First up was the *Daily Mail*. Their 7 January cover read 'Nintendo Face Health Storm.' The main points of the feature were:

- That this Christmas saw children having epileptic fits after playing Nintendo or Sega games. Five cases were reported, including a boy who 'fell to the floor trembling and banging his head after playing *Street Fighter II*', while a doctor at Frimley Park Hospital in Hampshire was quoted as saying, 'Oh no, not another one. What shall I write this up as – Nintendo-itis?'
- That the epilepsy warnings printed in game instructions aren't prominent enough – a spokeswoman for the British Epilepsy Association suggested they should appear on

SUPER PLAY PROFILES

The people behind the magazine:

MARCH 1993 ISSUE 5

MATT BIELBY

Favourite song: *Fairytale Of New York* by The Pogues
Last book I read: *Double Whammy* by Carl Hiaasen
Star sign: Sagittarius
Favourite airline: Singapore Airlines
Best ever journey: Canoeing the Border Waters from Michigan into Canada, 1985
Favourite ice cream flavour: Pistachio
Motto: A watched pot never boils

SUE GRANT

Favourite song: *Whole Lotta Rosie* by AC/DC
Last book I read: *Reflections In A Golden Eye* by Carson McCullers
Star sign: Pisces
Favourite airline: Cathay Pacific
Best ever journey: Coach trip to Czechoslovakia, 1991
Favourite ice cream flavour: Blackcurrant sorbet
Motto: Live and let live

JASON BROOKES

Favourite song: *Girl* by the Beatles
Last book I read: *A Good Man In Africa* by William Boyd
Star sign: Gemini
Favourite airline: JAL
Best ever journey: Toobin' down Itchitucknie river, Florida, 1986
Favourite ice cream flavour: Vanilla
Motto: Do you come here often?

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the outside of game packs so 'parents could assess if they thought it wise for their child to play with the game.'

● That a test held at London's Charing Cross Hospital, indicated that games could, indeed, promote seizures in 'those who may be prone to epileptic fits.'

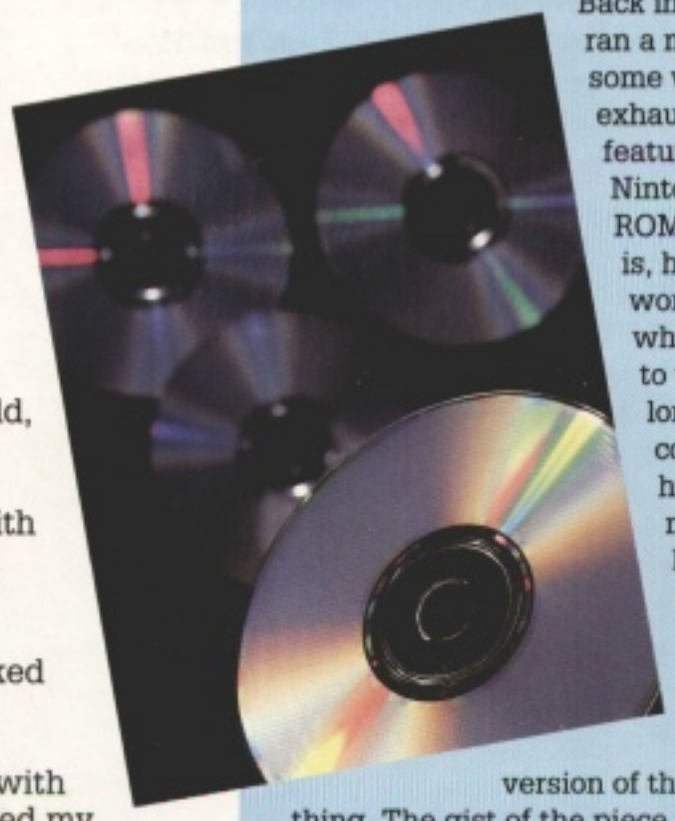
● That 'children should not be playing with (Nintendo) games when they are feeling unwell or overtired, or for long periods of time.' An hour (!) was recommended by experts as a maximum, a seemingly plucked figure with little real-world relevance.

Close on the heels of this came *The Sun*, with their 9 January cover story, 'Nintendo killed my son.' This covered similar ground, but more sensationally. In the weeks that followed most other major papers picked up on the story too.

So where does this leave us? Well, it ain't clear at the moment. While most of us would dismiss the main thrust of these stories as nonsense – surely in every case quoted the child was already epilepsy-prone, and could have been triggered by a million things just as easily as Nintendo? – it's unlikely the general public will see things that way. To add fuel to the flames, the Japanese government has recently sponsored a proper investigation into possible health problems caused by video gameplaying. Expect this story to run and run.

NINTENDO CD ROM

What is the real story?



Back in issue 3 we ran a massive – some would say exhaustive – feature on Nintendo CD ROM: what it is, how it works, and why it's going to take such a long time to come out, hitting the market at least a year after Sega's Mega Drive-based version of the same thing. The gist of the piece was that though Nintendo are going to be late into the market once again, their version, created in conjunction with Sony, would be the far superior machine, and worth waiting for.

Since then, however, things have changed. For one thing, despite the lack of any really superior games to run on it as yet, Sega's Mega CD has been a bigger hit than Nintendo had hoped – shortages have been reported in many major US cities. The second, perhaps even more disturbing, piece of news is that the Nintendo/Sony development deal may not be that solid after all – the two companies have released a number of conflicting press releases, Nintendo's insisting the deal is still on, Sony's failing to comment. Worse, current US rumours link Sony with Sega, perhaps leaving Nintendo out in the cold.

The fact, then, remains that Sega's system is on the shelves and selling, while Nintendo may well be still mucking around with which system to use (a 16-bit one like Sega's, or a new, more powerful, 32-bit one?), and whether they're going to have a development partner for it. Our chances of seeing the Nintendo CD ROM this year seem less likely with each passing day.

● Now check out our New Tech Update section on page 12, where we look at the Nintendo CD story in much more detail.

Just one version of how the Nintendo CD ROM drive might look.

Girl by the

: *A Good Man In*
n Boyd
i
: JAL
y: Toobin' down
r, Florida, 1986
am flavour:

me here often?

JONATHAN DAVIES

Favourite song: *Liebst du um Schönheit?* by Gustav Mahler
Last book I read: *A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court* by Mark Twain
Star Sign: Don't know
Favourite airline: They're all quite nice
Best ever journey: A circuit of the Ring of Kerry, Ireland, 1991
Favourite ice cream flavour: Vanilla
Motto: An Englishman's home is his castle

TRACI ROCHESTER

Favourite song: *There Must Be An Angel* by the Eurythmics
Last book I read: *Feel The Fear And Do It Anyway* by Susan Jeffers
Star sign: Taurus
Favourite airline: Monarch
Best ever journey: Parachute jump, 1991
Favourite ice cream flavour: Toffee and fudge
Motto: Feel the fear and do it anyway

JEREMY BRIDGEMAN

Favourite song: *Mysterious Ways* by U2
Last book I read: *Without Feathers* by Woody Allen
Star sign: Taurus
Favourite airline: British Airways
Best ever journey: A football trip to Miami via New York, 1984
Favourite ice cream flavour: Toffee and fudge
Motto: Be nice to people on the way up, 'cos you might meet them on the way down

SUPER PLAY PROFILES QUIZ

Okay, time for another 'odd' thing that's genuinely happened to a member of the *Super Play* team – but which one? The thing: Who once woke up one morning to find the trousers he/she had been wearing the night before hanging on the back of the chair soaking wet, when they'd been dry the previous night? Send to Trouser Disaster, *Super Play*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW, and you could win a T-shirt! Last month's answer (the light aircraft door opening thing): Traci. Last month's winner: Colin Watson from Romford.

ONLY IN JAPAN...

The land of the Super Nintendo is also the land of generally weird stuff. However, things get *really* odd when the Brits get involved too...

POSTMAN PAT GOES EAST!

Postman Pat, that curiously British and almost unbearably bland puppet character, has unbelievably been sold to over 40 countries to date, but the latest sale is the most significant. It is, of course, Japan, where the Fuji Television Network has bought two and a half hours of Pat material, and – more significantly – 10 year merchandising rights to the series. Thus Pat is about to receive a massive push in that country, with the character and his 'black and white cat', Jess, appearing as everything from cuddly toys to pencil cases. Hopes are high that the cute Jess could become a cult character, especially with Japan's high spending, cuddly-animal-loving 'office ladies.' Both Nintendo and Sega are reported to be interested in doing a Pat game, too, so this might not be the last you read about the damn thing in the pages of *Super Play*!

Above and below: Postman Pat and his loyal pal Jess, soon to be every kiddies favourite characters in Japan.

It's only guppy love!

OCEAN HITCHES UP WITH ROBOCOD

Recognise this? Of course you do – it's top Amiga/Mega Drive hit *Robocod*, now slated for a Super Nintendo release by July. The game's developers Millennium, a medium-to-small sized publishing outfit based in Cambridge, have passed over publishing duties to Ocean this time, but otherwise the game should prove very familiar to most of you – indeed, it's almost identical to its predecessors. (However, it does manage for the first time to combine the parallax scrolling of the Mega Drive game with the brightly coloured backgrounds of the Amiga one – a definite plus.)

For those who aren't familiar with the *Robocod* 'concept', the plot is simple. You play the newly robotised FI5H agent, James Pond, in a scrolling platform adventure through a host of colourful, cartoon-like levels – weirdo humour and lots of bad fishy puns feature strongly! Those with a sense of history will remember that *Robocod* was originally billed as the Amiga's answer to the Nintendo and Sega platform games that were leaping in popularity at the time of its initial release (Christmas '91), so it's really only fitting that it should eventually end up on Super Nintendo.

Ready for the world's hugest *Robocod* caption? The let's go. Clockwise from top: Robocod runs away from some sort of giant car(p); we all live in a yellow submarine; three of Robocod's assorted transports (a car, a plane and the 'turbo tub'); Robocod shows off his flexible bod; some weird wagon things. In all the pictures, check out the little Robo in the bottom corner – its state shows you how much energy you've got left.

The Force is with you!

SUPER STAR WARS

This, as you probably know, is *Super Star Wars* – the top rated (89% in *Super Play* issue 4) platform shoot-'em-up thing from Lucas Arts/JVC. The game's been a top seller across the world, partially because of a general revivial of interest in the whole *Star Wars* thing, and partially because it's such a great game in its own right. As we've already reviewed it in great depth we won't say much else about it here. except that it'll be available on official UK release around the time you read this, and will certainly have made the shelves by the end of February. Start saving your pennies now – this one's really worth it!

Underhand tactics?

More on Nintendo's incredible earnings!

Last month (issue 4) we mentioned how Nintendo have become the third most profitable non-financial company in Japan, falling into place behind Toyota and Nippon Telegraph & Telephone (the Japanese equivalent of British Telecom), and kicking Matsiushita Electric into fourth place. Well, now we get Nintendo's explanation for this phenomenon – 'despite low consumer spending in Japan,' says spokesman Yoshihiro Mori (Japan being in the middle of a recession too), 'Nintendo fans are willing to buy our software even as they cut back on other goods and services. The unit price of our products is relatively cheap, and even in a recession, parents still buy their kids game software as presents.' To which, no doubt, most British Nintendo players would respond that at least someone's getting the software 'relatively cheap'.

Meanwhile, however, independent Japanese analysts note that it is Nintendo's 90% market share in that country – and the resulting reluctance of most retailers to sell products from other companies for fear of offending them – that actually fuels the company's massive success. Indeed, Nintendo has been accused of using various underhand tactics to persuade shops to stock their products exclusively, though official complaints from anyone are proving notoriously hard to come by.

BLISTER ALERT!

At last – the Shoot 'n' Watch!

(AND IF YOU THINK THAT'S WEIRD, JUST CHECK OUT THE REST OF THIS LOT!)

Remember the second issue, where *Populous*-creator Peter Molyneux went on about something he called the 'Shoot 'n' Watch', but we couldn't find a picture of one? Well, here it is, at last – it's actually called the Super Shooting Watch, it looks like a Super Famicom joypad, and it's one of the latest hits in Japan. It tells the time, but it also has a number of games on it that you can select – the one Peter liked best was *Speed*, which basically consisted of you whacking the keypad as many times as possible in 10 seconds. Peter reckons he can now do well over 400, though we've yet to see him in 'action' to prove it...

- Even hotter property than the Shooting Watch, however, are the decidedly weirdo Barcode Battler, and its rival, Super Barcode Wars. These are electronic toys which read the barcodes from tins of beans, jars of coffee or whatever to 'randomly' generate the abilities and power of the characters you control. They've apparently become so popular in Japan that goods which just happen to have high barcode numbers are going through a bit of a sales boom, while Nintendo are responding to the threat by planning their own barcode reader for the Game Boy! Curiouser and curiouser.
- NEC consistently come up with wilder, weirder and more wonderful add-ons for their machines than either Sega or Nintendo. Just check this one out – the Virtual Cushion. Apparently what you do is connect it to the Audio socket on your PC Engine, sit back against it, and when a particularly loud noise occurs – an explosion, say – the cushion vibrates! It's almost like being there! (However, for real interactive action, the PC Engine Sound Pad – a cushion you lean your head against so the tiny speakers it contains shake your head about while you play – sounds like it may take some beating.)

Top: Who needs a Rolex when you can have the Super Shooting Watch instead?
Bottom: Whoopee cushion, eat your heart out – the Virtual Cushion reacts to noise and vibrates, making gameplaying that bit more realistic.

WIN! MORE COMPUTER SHOW TICKETS!

Remember the Future Entertainment Show (FES)? Remember GamesMaster Live! They were both gigantic shows, alright, but they're as nothing compared to the massive *Dail Mail* Ideal Home Exhibition, which runs at Earls Court, London from 18 March to 12 April!

But why's that of any interest to you? Well, this year, Ideal Home has a side event – the Ideal Electronic Games Show, running from the 25-28 March. All the major players in the industry are planning to be there, which makes the event one not to be missed. We've got 10 pairs of tickets to give away – they'd normally cost you £7 each – to the first 10 readers picked out of our hat who can tell us which WWF wrestler made appearances at the FES. Answers on the back of a postcard to Ideal Home competition, *Super Play*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW – and get them to us by 5 March, if we're to have a chance to get the tickets to you in good time.

SUPER PLAY'S HOT LIST

We play lots of games here at *Super Play*, but these are the five we play most often at the moment. They've all got a lot going for them.

HUMAN GRAND PRIX

(Human)

We've got the hang of the controls (at long last), and *Human Grand Prix*'s got us well and truly hooked. It's just so fast and so exciting, and at its best with two players. Definitely the top (non-*Mario Kart*) Formula 1 driving game on the Super Nintendo for now, but will the imminent *Nigel Mansell F1 Championship* (out around March in Japan) topple it? We'll have to wait and see.

SUPER STAR WARS

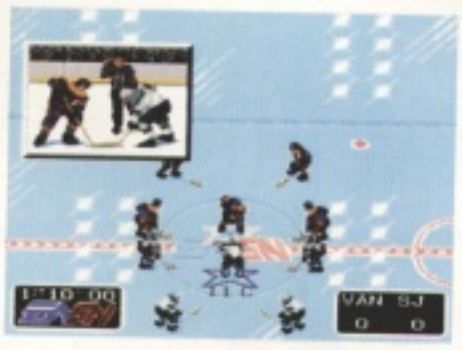
(JVC)

We quite often switch this one on just to listen to the brilliant music. Well, that's the intention, at least – we usually end up playing it and getting hopelessly involved. It's such a good game, you see, capturing the feel of the film perfectly while being varied and fun to play as well. It's only marred slightly by the occasional slow-down problem.

NHLPA HOCKEY

(Electronic Arts)

Although Ice Hockey isn't the most complex of sports, it makes a smashing video game – especially when it's executed as well as this. Okay, so the graphics are a bit jerky, but otherwise this is a top-notch conversion of the hugely successful Mega Drive game. You can even start fights in it!



DESERT STRIKE

(Electronic Arts)

The sandy graphics aren't exactly awe-inspiring, but the gameplay is spot on. You'll know just how the pilot of Blue Thunder felt as you weave between buildings, pump shells into tanks, take off and land, and pick things up with your winch. It's smart.

SUPER NBA BASKETBALL

(Techmo)

If you've never sampled the delights of basketball, start here. It's got the atmosphere of the real thing, is easy to get the hang of, and works well with two players. *Super Basketball*, available in the UK now, is a commendable alternative.

THE CAT'S BUBSY

In Claws Encounters Of The Furred Kind

(Accolade)

Cuter than Mario! Faster than Sonic! What could it be? *Super Play* lets the cat out of the bag...

When we looked at *Bubsy* last month, it was some way off being finished. Bubsy himself was looking good, boasting hundreds of frames of animation, but there wasn't much for him to actually do. Well, lots has happened since. Huge chunks of the game have been designed and populated with baddies, and it's possible to get a good idea of how it's all going to look.

To recap: Bubsy's no ordinary hero. He's an animal, of the feline persuasion. But this cat's no pussy. The Woolies have come from space to capture the world's yarnball supplies, and Bubsy's taking them on single-handed.

The game uses things like *Super Mario World* and *Sonic The Hedgehog* as its inspiration, which means lots of high-speed platforming action. And it's going to be huge. There'll be five 'chapters', each with three worlds, plus an extra-big last level – and it'll all be in a 16 Mbit cart.

The snag is that each level is introduced by an awful pun. 'Fair Conditioning' is a fairground level where you're on rollercoasters, 'Beavery Careful' has got lots of beavers in, and 'A Fistful of Yarn', well, simply isn't very funny at all. The instructions promise to be a veritable minefield of poor jokes.

Still, if you've got a strong constitution, the game itself is looking very nice indeed. Its *tour de force* is Bubsy himself, who's got a huge range of animations. Check out the box on the right for a taster.

The latest version of the game we've seen was roughly two-thirds completed, with lots of level-designing still to be done. Will Bubsy be the cat's whiskers? Or will it induce complete catalepsy? Accolade are hoping to have the game finished by around April or May-ish, so we'll let you know then.

JOHN SKEEL

John Skeel is the project leader on *Bubsy*, leading a core team of five programmers and graphic artists, though, as he says, 'we've had about 13 or 14 people working on it at different times if you actually add them all up.'

That's right – this guy's so good he can write games with his eyes closed!

T'S PYJAMAS!

The purr-fect addition to your games collection? They're certainly lapping it up in the States...

It's not just Bubsy who's got a nice line in expressive animation – the baddies put on a pretty good show too. Those balls of wool, incidentally, are the yarnballs you're meant to be retrieving from the Woolies. (And, no, we're not sure what Bubsy's looking so smug about either.)

What's he spotted? Well, actually, if you press Up on the controller while he's standing on the ground, the screen will scroll down a bit and Bubsy will gaze heavenward, wondering what you're looking for. The same happens if you press Down (only he looks down, obviously).

One of *Bubsy*'s later levels sees you making your way to the front of a fast-moving train, dodging baddies and trying not to fall under the wheels. At the front there's a huge engine, but, er, the game crashed before we got that far. (The finished version won't, of course.)

BODY LANGUAGE

He's the Rowan Atkinson of computer games! Launch him into the air and he'll grin smugly. Stand on the edge of a platform and he'll wobble precariously. Run into a baddy and he'll burn, crumble away, split in two, or meet various other fates.

EL

A CHAT WITH THE MAN BEHIND THE GAME

John, what was the idea behind this project?
Well, we wanted to do a platform game – they're something Accolade hasn't been known for in the past. There were four games we really rated when we begun – *Mario*, plus the Sega games *Sonic*, *Mickey's Castle Of Illusion* and *Quackshot*, the Donald Duck game. Where we thought they were weak was that the central characters didn't really exist outside the boundaries of the game. We wanted a hero who was a *real* character.

Was Bubsy himself your top priority for the game, then?
Yeah, pretty much – we worked on him first, then on the baddies, then the background levels. That's not to say we haven't spent ages on playtesting – I think we've got a game that's easy to play, but hard to master, just as they should be.

Was he always going to be a cat?
No, not at all. Mike Berlin, who kicked off the project, and myself hired a character animator called Ken Macklain to design Bubsy – we knew pretty much what his character was to be, but not the body to fit it. We got Ken to go through about 25 variations, from ones that looked like Ren & Stimpey (*popular cartoon characters in the States – Ed*) to a sort of weasel with racing glasses on.

Any plans for a sequel?
Oh yes – for much more than that, in fact. The first game should ship in the States in April, then we'll think about spinning the character off into other games. Our intention all along has been to create a whole bunch of characters who all star in their own games and guest star in each others – our model has been the Warner Bros cartoon characters. They started off with Bugs Bunny, then Daffy Duck came along, then Porky Pig and Road Runner. Well, Bubsy's our Bugs Bunny.

Blimey! So how many of these games are you going to do?
Ha! That bit is classified!

The original *Bubsy* blueprints, which were recently de-classified.

NEW TECH

BY JASON BROOKES

Yes, it's yet another new semi-regular *Super Play* column! This is where we'll talk about all the new Super Nintendo technical innovations (and no, that doesn't just mean CD!)

CD ROM UPDATE

More problems for Sony; and hardware details announced to developers!

No, it's not the SNES CD ROM, just an Apple Mac CD drive. However, Super Nintendo CD ROM games *will* come cased like this.

The development of Nintendo's CD ROM drive has been plagued with further difficulties. The latest development in this on-going saga concerns a breakdown in relations between Sony and Nintendo. In issue 3's extensive guide to CD ROM we explained the full history of the development of Nintendo's CD unit. Since then, however, Sony have taken a defensive stance on all matters connected with Nintendo. In Tokyo last December Sony announced that they *wouldn't* be developing a CD ROM drive for the Super Famicom. Strangely enough, this followed an announcement by Nintendo two months earlier saying that the two companies *would* be working together. Confused? You should be.

So what's the official story now? Well, it's still rather confusing, we're afraid. Shortly after Sony made their statement, a spokesman for Nintendo responded by claiming that a valid working relationship with Sony still existed, although now it only applied to the *development* of the CD ROM adaptor device, and not production of the CD drive. Considering Sony's expertise in CD technology this is a strange situation.

Consequently, the development of Sony's hybrid console, the Play Station, seems to have been put on hold. Only a few months ago Nintendo's announcement suggested complete compatibility between the Play Station unit and their own CD ROM adaptor. Once again, conflicting interests seem to have reversed the situation, and the paving a of a smooth path into the video game industry is proving to be more than a game for Sony.

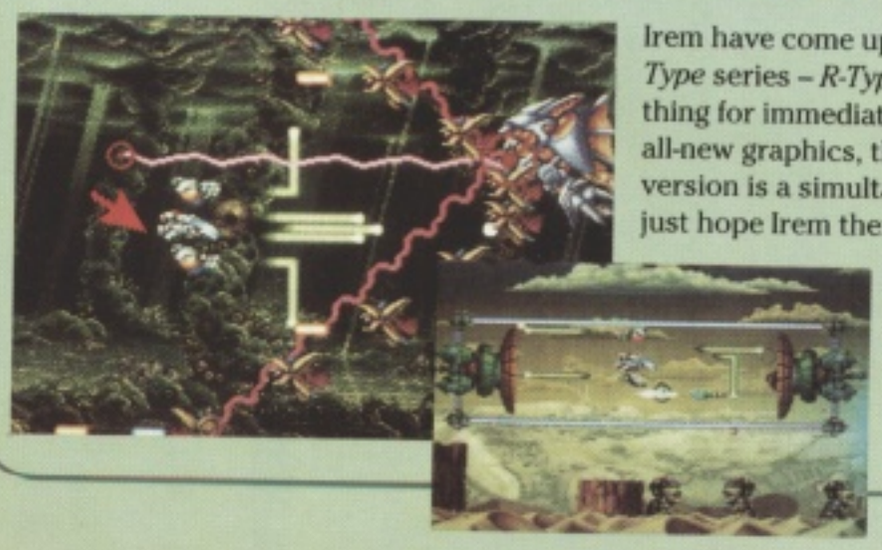
CD ROM ADAPTOR

On a more positive note, details of the CD ROM adaptor unit were released to Japanese third-party developers on 27 November 1992. Unlikc existing CD ROM systems such as Sega's Mega CD and NEC's Duo, Nintendo CD software will come cased just like in the picture above. The advantages of this are three-fold: First Nintendo will include SRAM (Static Random Access Memory) in the CD cases for saving game data. With each game having its own memory, this will avoid the problems of data overloading the systems like the Mega CD and Duo suffer from. Subsequently, large amounts of back-up RAM won't need to be included in the CD unit itself, and extra RAM carts like the one released by Sega for the Mega CD shouldn't be necessary. The second advantage is more obvious: Encased CDs will be more durable and child-proof. Lastly, it's hoped that such measures will act as a safeguard against piracy.

It was also confirmed that the unit would sit beneath the Super Famicom and not side-by-side like the old PC Engine CD system did. A system cartridge will still act as the 'brain' of the unit, and is based around a 32-bit RISC chip (possibly similar to the Super F/X chip), now abbreviated to the SCCP (Super Famicom CD ROM system Co-processor). HANDS (Hyper Advanced Nintendo Data transfer System) is the new name for the hardware that supports the SCCP. The combination of both these features makes for dramatically reduced access times – the perennial problem that CD ROM systems have been facing so far. As far as the proposed Japanese price goes, it remains unchanged at ¥27,000 (about $135), but if the talk at the recent Las Vegas Consumer Electronic Show (CES) is anything to go by, don't expect to see it until 1994. A Nintendo CD development conference was scheduled to take place about a month or so after the Las Vegas Consumer Electronics Show – ie mid February, about the time you read this. Expect more news as we receive it.

BEST SHOOT-'EM-UP OF THE YEAR?

R-Type Leo
WHEN WILL IT MAKE SUPER NINTENDO?



Irem have come up with a third coin-op in the *R-Type* series – *R-Type Leo*, a game that looks a sure thing for immediate SNES conversion. Apart from all-new graphics, the main selling point of this new version is a simultaneous two- player more. Let's just hope Irem themselves aren't to be the ones to convert it! (After all, look at the hash they made of the speed on *Super R-Type*!)

Beautiful graphics have always been *R-Type*'s trademark.

SALES BOOM!

1992 'better than expected' – Nintendo

How many official SNES' do you think have been sold in the UK so far? The answer?: 700,000 – a spectacular figure, considering the machine was only launched last April, and it tops Nintendo/Bandai's predictions. This still leaves the installed user base well behind the Sega Mega Drive's 1,215,000 units, but we're catching up all the time. Software sales have been strong too – over 100,000 of the official *Super Mario Kart* were shipped pre-Christmas, while Bandai say they'll have between 45 and 50 official carts on sale by the time you read this.

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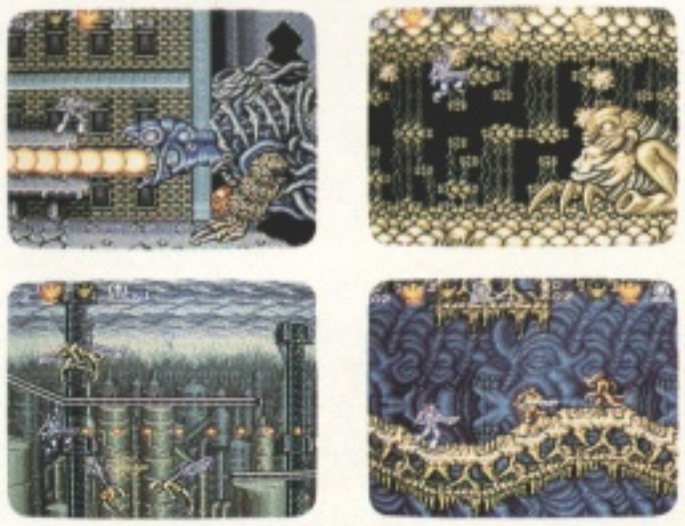
New. For your SUPER NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM New. For your SUPER NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM New. For your

SUPER PROBOTECTOR ALIEN REBELS

The Battle is about to begin!

The year is 2636 and Earth is faced with the threat of a massive invasion. The mad, mutant alien rebels are back with a vengeance, looking for their revenge - the anihilation of the human race.

Earth's only hope is the PROBOTECTOR, the strongest fighting robots in history, but will they be enough? Can they destroy these miserable mutants in time to save the world...



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LIVE FROM HELL CITY

14

AKIHABARA – ELECTRIC TOWN

He's back – it's Peter Evans, *Super Play's* very own man in Japan! This month he takes us on a guided tour of Akihabara – Tokyo's electronic jungle.

This column is being written to the strains of the soundtrack from *Silent Möbius 2*, the cyber-psychic anime movie released here this Summer. A capsule description of it would be a cross between *Blade Runner* and Clive Barker's *Hellraiser*, with music by Carl Orff. Not heard of it? Well, that's hardly a surprise: 'here' is, after all, Tokyo. Those of you wishing to know more about *Silent Möbius* can try asking at your local comic specialist – they may carry (or be able to get hold of) the movie merchandise, and excellent some of it is too.

But that's enough of that. My mission here isn't to talk movies, but to introduce you to one of the more interesting districts of Tokyo. An area that's a wonderland for gameplayers...

Typical Japanese suburbia, outside of Tokyo. This is where Peter lives, a short(ish) train hop into town.

It's called Akihabara, and it's on the east side of Tokyo, at the junction of the Chuo and JR Yamanote lines. It is a district devoted entirely to the worship of a new goddess: Soni-denki-pon, the goddess of electricity. Every year, millions of effigies are consecrated in her name by application of the Holy Watt in a ritual known here as 'plugging in'.

If you're Japanese, and you need something electrical, this is the place to find it. There are, however, a few prerequisites for happy shopping, including good walking shoes, patience, and a tolerance for noise pollution that would melt most heads. It is not so much the level of noise (consistently loud) that does it, as the combination of several different ones – everywhere you go competing muzaks strain to make themselves heard above each other, while the hundreds of cries of 'Irrashaimase!' ('Welcome!') eat into your brain. And in some places, trains passing overhead actually make the whole street rattle!

To make the best of Akihabara, it helps to know exactly what you're looking for. However, being able to understand the salesman is a plus too – a smattering of Japanese can prove a godsend, though many of them will be able to work out what you're after if you speak carefully. Try starting with something like 'Ano... Sumimasen, eigo-o hanasemasu ka?' (Basically translated: 'Do you speak English?')

On this visit to the area, me and my keeper (sorry, able assistant) Ai-Chan were on a quest for a new laser disc player. Why not come with us and see how we did? (For the full effect, try getting two different radios in the room, tuning them to different stations, then switching them up loud!) Let's go...

Serious about shopping

The train stops at a undistinguished platform to the tones of 'Akihabara. Akihabara de gozaimusa.' ('This is Akihabara'). Escaping the lurid orange carriage, and following the exit signs, we discovered that the Chuo line is on the third floor of the station building! Hordes of potential shoppers seethed down two sets of stairs, through the ticket barriers and out onto the street with frightening rapidity. This was a Sunday and there was shopping to be done.

There are two things you notice

The centre of Akihabara at night – electronic shops (some around eight storeys tall) as far as the eye can see.

yamagiwa
yamagiwa
感謝
いいものズラッとお買得！大家電祭
思い出は大切な宝物。
ビデオに残そう！4F
そして暖かく。
暖房フェア
3階
LD・VHD・ビデオ・パソコン
新作ソフト好評発売中！
ヤマギワ

immediately when buying things in Japan. First, shops have no such thing as a ground floor. Walking in off the street, you go straight into what they call the 'first' floor, conventionally labelled 1F (the basement is B1F, in case you were wondering) – just one more indication of the strong American influence on Japan.

Even more bizarrely – and quite unlike anything in the UK – shops do not always have street frontage. It is quite common that the only evidence you'll find of a store you are looking for is a sign like 'Studio Hell City 2F', or 'English Pub King George 4F', halfway up the building. This can be a major cause of injury, bumping into

The station from Peter's house into Akihabara, along the Chuo line. Laser disc shopping starts here!

Many streets are barely passable by traffic, instead crammed with people, bikes and vending machines.

people or objects while attempting to read all the signs stretching up the side of an 11 storey building. How do you spot a Gaijin? (A foreigner, like me, or, presumably, you.) Look for someone craning their necks, staring upwards in confusion!

Leaving the station, Ai-Chan and I filtered our way through the crowd milling around the station, and entered the first, and nearest, shop. It was the multi-storey Satomusen store (its logo's a cheetah), a shop that sells everything from computerised toilets (*see Peter Molyneux's Famicom Space World '92 show report in issue 2 – Ed*), through fridges of monolithic proportions, to the very latest in in-car satellite navigation systems. The latter are advertised by that icon of electronic music, Jean Michel Jarre, driving an intensely expensive Ferrari around Kyoto.

We like this Japan suburbia stuff so much here's more, complete with overhead train.

Hell is other people

As Ai-Chan had pointed out, this would be an ideal place to buy her a new laser disc player, so she could watch *Project A-Ko* and *Super Cat Girl Nuku-Nuku* to her heart's content. This was fine by me, as it should save many hours of searching – and would have done, if Satomusen hadn't failed to stock the model she wanted.

In daylight, the main avenue in Akihabara is a long, straight, and fairly unspectacular road, six lanes wide, lined with shops of all shapes and sizes. It's also almost always full. Not of traffic – only the foolish or desperate would try to drive near here – but pedestrians. On this particular trip, a few cars and trucks crawled slowly along somewhere near the centre of the street, but they could only move slightly faster than the people who swarmed around them. At designated points called tidal barriers – or, more correctly, crossings – shoppers created an unceasing flow from one side of the road to the other.

Akihabara is quite an experience at any time, but even more so on this particular Sunday – there seemed to be some sort of ritual exorcism going on. It involved about 10 groups of between 50 and 100 people, all wearing team colours, running around the back streets carrying large drums, chanting and screaming. It obviously all meant something, though I still haven't quite managed to work out what yet...

These gangs sometimes blocked off whole roads, but the shoppers flowed around them, as they struggled vainly to avoid the lure of bright lights, loud noises, cute women, and that most sacred of words – 'SALE'.

Electrical storm

It was along these very pavements that we patrolled, working our way down over half a kilometre of assorted shops before we tired of going in a straight line. On the station-side of the main avenue, we passed many smaller stores that sold lights, wire, screwdrivers and tools. Then came the large shops, including a selection of 'soft centres' over seven storeys high. These are shops that sell nothing but software, mainly for computers but not necessarily, and they can be absolutely massive. Other media products – like compact discs, laser discs and pre-recorded video tapes – also count as 'software' in Japan, and as domestic CDs are about a third more expensive than their import cousins, shops that specialise in imported compact discs are very popular. (There's a Virgin Megastore in Shinjuku that does exactly that.) Vending machines nestle in any available cranny.

Then there are lifestyle stores, which sell things that, for example, help you to 'enjoy a good healthy life with Nanika Corporation'. In

Now this is what we call a shop! No mistaking what it sells from the outside, what with all that writing, and bags of bargains within!

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other words, they flog all the basic electrical goodies that the average Japanese family needs to make life palatable. Such delicacies as HDTVs (High Definition Televisions), home facsimile machines and telephones that play *The Four Seasons* are, of course, essential purchases.

It's all very tempting, so I was counting my

Wanna buy a TV? You're spoilt for choice here, that's for sure, including fab new widescreen models.

blessings that the spending money was not in Ai-Chan's possession. The way she was admiring the newest Sony HDTV – a snip at just 1.3M¥ (or roughly £5,000!) – made my wallet break out into a cold sweat. At great personal risk I dragged her away, and we crossed back into the side streets.

A hole in my wallet

If anything, these are worse than the main avenue. Without the restraining influence of the traffic, people were everywhere (as were vending machines), including my supposed exorcists, who were back, this time completely blocking some junctions with their drums. Moving around here is rather like trying to swim up a waterfall. Everyone weaves around as they avoid stationary objects like buildings, and it's all too easy to get carried away helplessly on the tide.

Here, too, computer stuff is everywhere. Along with a multitude of noodle parlours, that sell either ramen (string-like noodles) or soba (thicker and softer ones), every small street seemed to boast at least one 'Sofmap' shop. Ai-Chan finally settled on a store called Ishimarusen for the laser disc player, because they gave her a great discount, free delivery and discount vouchers for their own soft shop. A good job too, as paying up left a sizeable hole in our collective wallet. The discount vouchers enabled her to buy the two discs she wanted, along with *Starblade* by Namco, the laser disc of the arcade game (good stuff, incidentally).

Significantly lighter financially, we ventured into a nearby Sofmap in an attempt to find out why there were so many of them. The answer seems to be that because they are all quite small, and each one incredibly specialised, you need a lot to cover every sort of software there is available. Some shops sell nothing but Game Boy carts, some only Mega Drive games. The one we went into was for Super Famicom software only – to the extent that it didn't even sell the actual consoles, just the games. To actually buy a Super Famicom to play them on you would have had to venture into yet

You can get brilliant bargains on Japanese PCs in Akihabara – there's a whole floor of these NEC models in the LOAX computer centre.

another shop (though happily there was a suitable one directly opposite).

Places like these make a mockery of the recommended retail prices set by the manufacturers. Games with cover prices of 9,800¥ (about £40) can be found for around 6,000¥ (£25-ish), or, with a little care, closer to 5,000¥ . Older games can usually be had for a fraction of their original prices. Keen gameplayers like to buy a hot new game on the day of release (hence the massive queues for things like *Dragon Quest V*) – after that, demand quickly tails off, and so, it seems, do prices. (Very different to the software situation in the UK, if I remember rightly.)

Super Famicom heaven

On our way back to the station we popped into perhaps the most interesting shop of them all – the LAOX Computer Games Centre. The ground floor (yes, that's 1F) of this place is completely devoted to Super Famicom games. Upstairs seemed larger, and contained a mixture of NEC PC Engine, Sega Mega Drive and SNK Neo Geo games and hardware. It also had a section devoted entirely to games extras, like calendars and CDs. Yuzo Koshiro's music looked to be very popular, especially the orchestral arrangements of games like *Actraiser*. On the next floor, 3F, they stocked games for the Japanese equivalent of the PC, the NEC PC-9801. (And the less said about some of the 'adult' software we saw up there, the better...) Happily, we'd deliberately made sure we came to this place last. Otherwise there's no way would have had enough dosh left for the laser disc player...

Next month: Peter Evans on the mysteries of Japanese pop music!

***Silent Möbius 2*, Peter's favourite (above), has some great soundtrack CDs.**

SUPER PLAY EYECATCH

Time, once again, for our quick guide to the hot games that have really been capturing the imaginations of games players across Japan this month. Look out for our reviews of most of these, coming soon to a newsagent near you...

BIO METAL

by Athena

A new 8 Mbit shoot-'em-up wowing them in Japan, *Bio Metal* is an eight-level game with two novel twists. The mid-level bosses are gigantic, and the power-up system is clever – throwing lots of power ups at you if you're doing badly and dying a lot in the game, but getting stingy if you're doing well. Sounds good? Well, that's because it is. More news soon...

COSMO GANG: THE PUZZLE

by Namco

Remember *Cosmo Gang*, the cute *Galaxians*-style shoot-'em-up, reviewed in issue 3? Well, here's a new version of the game, also from Namco, featuring the same characters, but this time in a *Tetris*-style puzzle game. *Cosmo Gang: The Puzzle* should be out in Japan at the end of February, so expect a *Super Play* review soon.

ALBERT ODYSSEY

by Sunsoft

A gigantic 10 Mbit sword and sorcery RPG, *Albert Odyssey* takes you through eight different lands, most of the game presented using the *Zelda*-like view shown here. For the fight sequences things switch to a very pretty side-on, *Street Fighter II*-style perspective. It's due for a March release in Japan. Watch this space.

ART OF FIGHTING

by Takara

Another of Takara's Neo Geo conversions, this is based on a recent Neo Geo arcade original – the Neo Geo version is actually a 102 Mbit game (yes, you read that right). It features bonus stages (where you must do stuff like swipe the heads off beer bottles), plenty of baddies (all with special moves) and the traditional Mr Big-captured-your-girlfriend plot. The game is impressive graphically, but we'll have to wait and see if it lives up to *SF II* in the playability stakes.

TRICK OR CHEAT?

Cheat carts on test!

Game Genie vs Pro Action Replay

Sick of getting stuck on your games? Then you may need one of these cheat cartridges – they both let you customise your games by entering special codes. But which one is best?

It's a familiar story. You've spent 50 quid on a game, you've become horribly stuck at the beginning of level two, you've searched in vain for a cheat mode, and you're at the end of your tether. The answer? Perseverance. Or, alternatively, try one of these special cartridges.

Action Replay has been selling by the warehouse-full recently, thanks to some particularly nifty *Street Fighter II* codes. And now, with the arrival of the Game Genie, it's got a competitor. We thought we'd size them up.

What's this? Can you *really* be controlling M. Bison in *Street Fighter II*? Well, yes you are – but only if you're using Game Genie. (This isn't a perfect cheat, by the way – the screen glitches, the colours are wrong and so are the moves, but it's a start.) This is just one of the unique gameplaying tricks you can try using a cheat cartridge.

PRO ACTION REPLAY

Datel Electronics

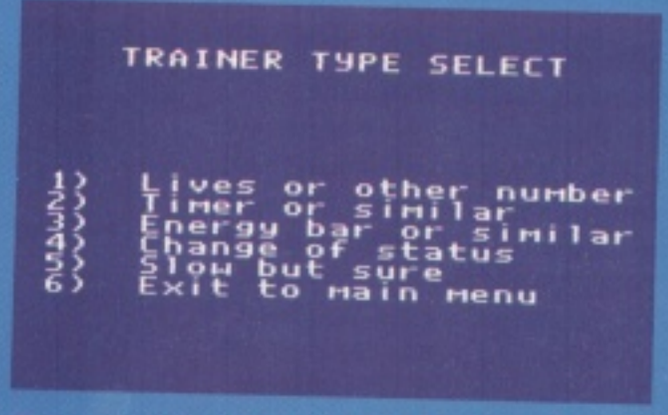
The Pro Action Replay cartridge has been around for as long as the SNES, and is the latest in a long line of Action Replays for machines like the Game Boy, the Amiga, and – yes – the Spectrum.

The unit looks like Datel's own Universal Adaptor. And, indeed, it works as an adaptor – you can use it to play import carts on a UK machine, just like all the adaptors we tested in issue 4. But there's an awful lot more to it than initially meets the eye.

Switch on your Super NES with an Action Replay plugged into it and you'll be presented with a special 'code' screen, into which you can enter up to four eight-digit codes, consisting of letters and numbers. These codes are specific to the game you've got plugged into the cart, and let you do things like give yourself infinite lives, invincibility or extra weapons that you'd normally spend ages trying to acquire.

But where do these codes come from? Well, there are two ways of finding them. The easiest is to watch out for them in print – a few come with the Action Replay, and you'll find them in *Super Play*'s Mode 7 pages. Datel run a helpline, too, for new codes. The more adventurous, however, can try their luck with Action Replay's 'trainer mode'. This allows you to find your own codes, albeit with some trial and error, and lots of switching-on-and-off of the game. There are three sorts of code. The simplest to find are ones for infinite lives or infinite turbo-boosts. Trickier are energy bars – a fair bit of guesswork is involved. And finally you can try getting those extra weapons alluded to earlier, or fixing it so you're always Super Mario. This takes hours, though, and here at *Super Play* we'll be jiggered if we can do much with it. (People must be able to, though – take a look at the *SF II* codes in Mode 7, on page 78.)

This is what'll greet you when you switch Action Replay on. Tap in your codes, press start and you're off.


TRAINER TYPE SELECT
1) Lives or other number
2) Timer or similar
3) Energy bar or similar
4) Change of status
5) Slow but sure
6) Exit to main menu

This is the bit you won't find on the Game Genie – the Trainer screen. Here's where you can (hopefully) work out your own codes.

GAME GENIE

Hornby

The Game Genie is the new kid on the block. Developed by UK outfit Code Masters (interviewed in issue 4), it's been available in America for a few months, it's being launched in the UK in March by Hornby (of train set fame), and it's the successor to the successful NES Game Genie.

Now, before you say 'Urgh! It looks like a breeze block gone wrong', bear in mind that the Game Genie illustrated here is the one that's been developed for the slightly 'different' American market. The one that's being sold in the UK will be a much more appealing shape – more curvy, like a UK game cartridge.

Perhaps the best way to explain how the Game Genie works is to highlight the differences between it and the Action Replay. And the difference that's going to matter to most people is that with the Game Genie you can't work out your own codes – there's no

The American Game Genie, it may not look like much, but it's a clever little devil all the same.

'trainer' facility. So you're going to have to rely on the code book that comes with the cart (which contains several codes for 100-odd games), updates from the manufacturers (a telephone hotline and codebook supplements) and codes printed in magazines – like *Super Play*'s Mode 7. This will be frustrating for many of you, but the advantage to it is that Code Masters have a team of experts working out codes round the clock, and they're able to come up with special effects that you wouldn't

Game Genie's code screen has lots of explosions and letters whizzing around.

get with Action Replay – a 'super jump' for Mario, for example, that lets you clear whole levels in a single bound, or a code that makes every lemming in *Lemmings* count as two.

Other differences from the Action replay are cosmetic. The Game Genie has a green light to indicate when codes are active. There's a more impressive front end than the Action Replay's, with lots of animation and sound effects. And the Game Genie doesn't work as an adaptor, so you'll have quite a precarious arrangement of adaptors and carts if you want to use it with import games. Oh, and the way the codes work is different, too, but that's horribly technical, and we won't go into it now.

HIT THE CODE, JACK

(*No, no, no! – Ed.*)

So what can these babies do? Well, in theory both cartridges do much the same thing. Infinite lives, for example. *Super Adventure Island* players can enter 7E030D03 into the Action Replay for infinite lives, or C2B3D46D into the Game Genie for the same thing. Invincibility? Entering 3CA7A467 into the Game Genie will do the business for *The Addams Family*, while putting 7E00C302 into the Action Replay will do the same.

But there's more. Crowds at the Future Entertainment Show last year were wowed by a demonstration on the Datel stand of '*Speed Fighter II*' – actually *Street Fighter II* speeded up by an Action Replay code. The code's 7E0C6001 if you want to try it for yourself. The same thing's possible on the Game Genie, in theory, but the code hasn't been released as yet.

What the Game Genie can do that the Action Replay can't, though, is stuff like changing the number of lives you start the game with. So if you used the code F6B46F07 with *Super Mario World* you'd start the game with 25 lives rather than the usual five. Then, when you got really good, you could use DDB46F07 and start with just the one life, increasing the challenge. It'll also let you start games on any level you like.

Both units feature an on/off switch so you can activate and deactivate the codes at will during the game. Another thing to bear in mind: the effects of the codes aren't permanent, and your cartridges won't be altered in any way. When you switch off the Super Nintendo they'll disappear, and your games will return to normal.

Mario takes off with a 'super jump' that's twice as high as normal using the Game Genie.

Ryu looks a little the worse for wear – or could it be the result of an Action Replay code?

Top Gear flies by when you've got everlasting nitros – thanks to Game Genie.

INDEPENDENT SUPER NINTENDO MAGAZINE

SUPER PLAY

ADVICE

So, come on, which is best?

Well, really you've got to look at the facts. Action Replay lets you work out your own codes, while Game Genie leaves you relying on its manufacturer's efforts. Action Replay works as an adaptor, while Game Genie doesn't. Game Genie really goes for it presentation-wise, making it the more entertaining of the two to actually use, and is a bit better packaged. And Game Genie can create a wider range of effects than Action Replay. They've each got their strengths and weaknesses, in other words. If you don't mind getting your hands dirty and experimenting with it, Action Replay is by far the most useful of the two – you can buy a brand new game and have it cracked within minutes. But if you'd rather let someone else do all the hard work, perhaps Game Genie might be a better bet.

One thing's for sure, though: both carts are a lot of fun, and both come highly recommended by us. You need never get stuck in a game again!

● Stop Press: Code Masters, developers of the Game Genie, and Hornby, who distribute it in the UK, are currently claiming that they'll very shortly have a UK patent for the device. If and when this arrives, of course, it would put them in a position where they could make strong legal claims to have rival 'game enhancers' removed from the market – despite the fact that, on Super Nintendo at least, Datel were there first. Could a Hornby/Datel legal battle be on the cards?

ANIME WORLD

Pronounced 'ah-nee-may'

SUPER PLAY'S OTAKU DICTIONARY

Understanding the special language of Japanese animation is a whole art form in itself. Helen McCarthy explains all. Plus! Matt Bielby reviews the most easy-to-get-hold-of Japanese anime videos in the UK.

One of the things that confuse new fans reading about anime are the words you might run across – not in this mag, of course, but in less reader-friendly titles – which you don't understand and which the writer doesn't explain. Anime has its own 'language'. Here, then, is a brief guide, with a rough idea of pronunciation thrown in. Armed with this, you'll be able to throw jargon about like a complete otaku!

ANIME (ah-nee-may): The Japanese loan-word (a word borrowed from another language) for animation; now borrowed back by Western fans to distinguish the Japanese product from European or American animation.

ANIPARO (Ah-nee-pah-row): Animation parody, a popular manga genre in which characters and ideas from anime shows are used in comic stories.

BGM: (bee-gee-em): Background music.

CB (chee-bee): Short form for Child Body, an up-to-date version of -chan (see below).

-CHAN (short 'a', as in 'chat'): Suffix meaning darling or little one, eg Chibi Maruko-chan, a term of affection usually used for small animals or young children and between romantic partners. In anime or manga, a -chan is a squashed up, childlike version of a chara (character) or mecha (robots etc); it's also a fairly old-fashioned term, with CB used more often. -Chans, CBs and SDs, their manic younger brothers, have their own comics and TV shows – very popular in Japan.

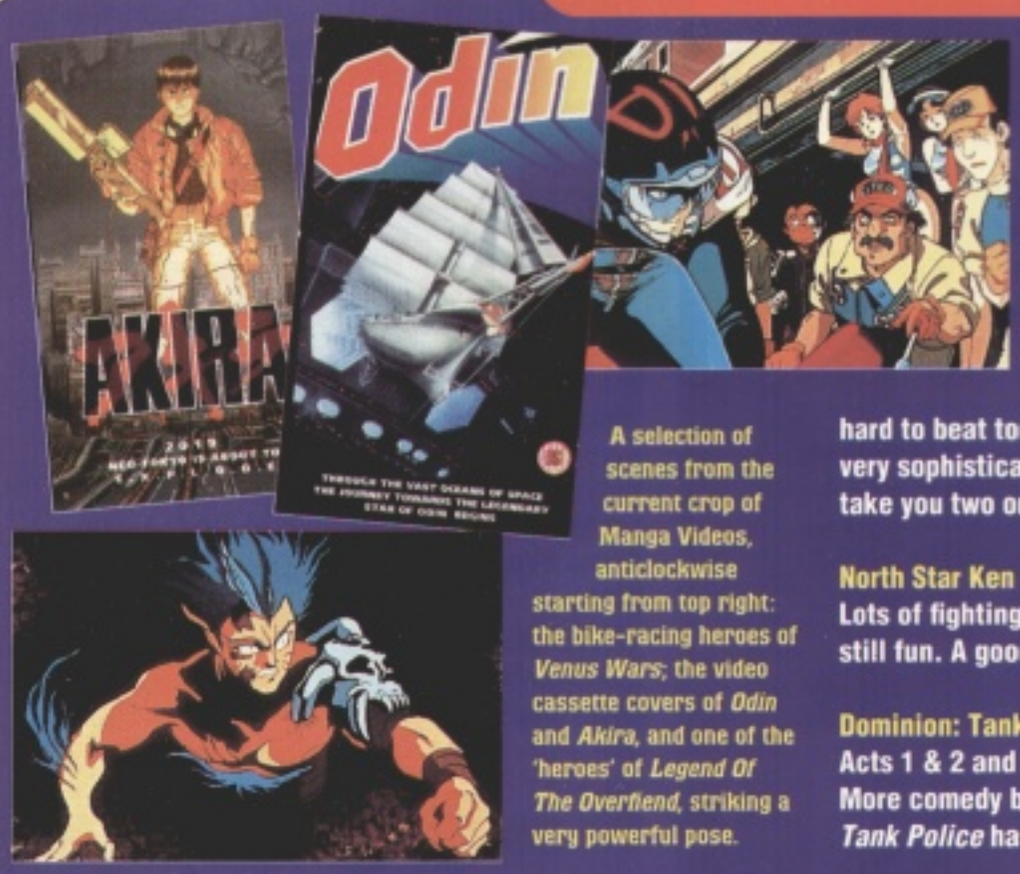
CHARA (kah-rah): Short name for character.

JAPLISH: The way the Japanese can write English with an offbeat view of the structure of the language! Lowest grade examples are some electronic equipment manuals; finest are titles like Attacked Mystification Police Department (from *Silent Mobius*). To achieve Japlish perfection a phrase or sentence should make its meaning obvious in context, but be incomprehensible on a purely literal level. (The subtitles to some of the regular features in *Super Play* – 'Hyper Exciting Reader's Voice', for instance – are examples of Japlish).

KAWAII (kah-waie): Japanese for cute. Cuteness, as mentioned before, is an important characteristic in Japan.

A selection of original soundtrack CDs to anime films – there are hundreds of these things on offer in Japan.

ANIME FILMS AVAILABLE IN THE UK



A selection of scenes from the current crop of Manga Videos, anticlockwise starting from top right: the bike-racing heroes of *Venus Wars*; the video cassette covers of *Odin* and *Akira*, and one of the 'heroes' of *Legend Of The Overfiend*, striking a very powerful pose.

Matt Bielby takes a brief look at the current crop of Manga Video releases, all available to rent or buy down your local high street.

Akira
The one you simply must have, *Akira* is the film that sparked off the existing interest in Japanese animation in the UK, and is still hard to beat today. Some fab sequences, and a very sophisticated look, but the plot is bound to take you two or three viewings to work out. 9/10

North Star Ken
Lots of fighting, cruder animation than *Akira*, but still fun. A good beer-and-take-away movie. 7/10

Dominion: Tank Police
Acts 1 & 2 and Acts 3 & 4
More comedy based than the earlier offerings, *Tank Police* has a cute young heroine, a couple of evil (but sexy) cat woman villains, plenty of tanks and much destruction. Excellent fun. 8/10

Project A-Ko
A weird choice, this features a trio of super-powered schoolgirls, and is a good laugh. 7/10

Odin
Almost *Star Trek*-ish space opera, *Odin* is more predictable than some of the others, but makes up for it in ace square-rigger space ships. 6/10

Legend Of The Overfiend
The only 18-certificate release, and featuring much disgusting sex and violence, *Overfiend* definitely isn't for the young or squeamish. However, for those who *can* live with this sort of thing, the odd plot makes for rather (ahem) 'intriguing' viewing... 8/10

Venus Wars
A sort of futuristic biker-gang-cum-war movie,

MANGA (mahn-gah): Japanese for comic, often wrongly applied to anime films and OAVs (Original Anime Videos) here, as the styles and themes are often similar. Popular manga are also produced as anime.

MECHA (meh-kah): Short for mechanical, meaning any kind of machine from tanks to giant robots.

MOBILE SUIT: Term coined by Yoshiyuki Tomino for his *Gundam* series, a mecha which needs a human operator to function, but which enhances and improves the operator's range, strength, firepower or other task-related skill. Mobile suits can be anything from a simple exoskeleton to a fully-armed combat weapons system over 30 feet tall.

NEWTYPE: Another Tomino concept from *Gundam*, a genetic mutation of humanity which seems to occur spontaneously among those with either a talent for, or connection with, work in space, but can also be artificially induced. New-Types have an affinity for technology; the most powerful can run complex weapons systems purely by the power of thought.

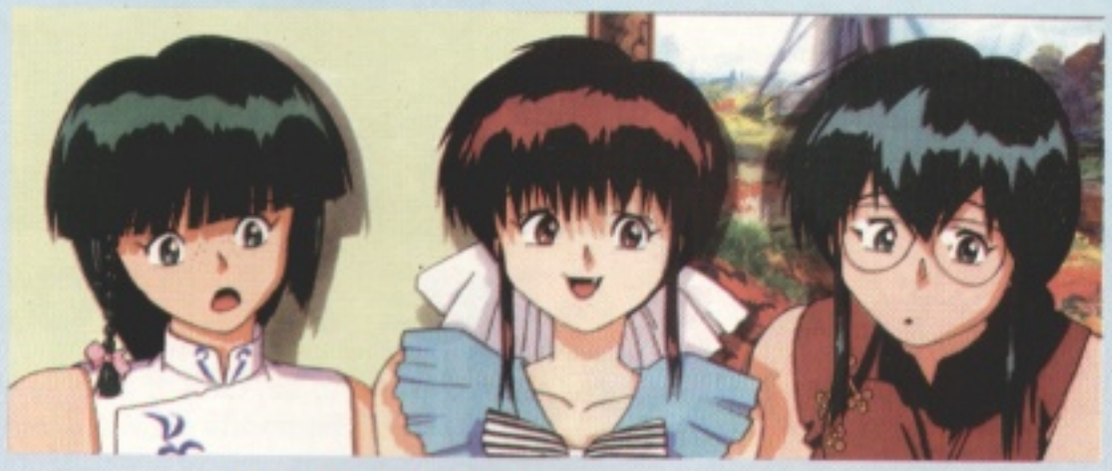
OAV (oh-ay-vee) also written OVA: Original Animation Video, a work made for release directly on to video rather than for TV or cinema. Because of the far lower costs, many of the more offbeat or specialised new works are released as OAVs.

OST (oh-ess-tee): Original Sound Track. Anime music is enormously popular, and as well as the original score, variations are often issued. OST on the label or in the reviews tells you this is the music you heard on screen.

OTAKU (oh-tah-koo): Japanese word meaning obsessive, in the sense of being narrow, selfish and not interested in society. Anime fans are often described as 'otaku no bideo', which in Western circles is usually translated as 'video fanboy'. However, most Western fans view the term not as a badge of shame but as a medal of honour – an otaku is someone with the flexibility and breadth of vision to step outside the pulp entertainment of their own culture and look at what others have to offer.

SD (ess-dee): Short name for Super Deformed, used as a prefix, eg *SD Gundam*. Like -chans and CBs, SDs are squashed down versions of charas and mecha. Where -chans are cute and innocent, though, SDs tend to be manic, mischievous and destructive.

So there you have it – a brief guide to anime jargon. I hope you'll find it useful!



ANIME CONTACT

Anime UK Magazine, 70 Mortimer St, London W1 (£3.50 from good SF/comic shops, or mail order from publishers + 50p p&p).
The Manga Club, Island World Communications, 40 St.Peter's Rd, London W6 9BD.

This page, clockwise from top left: A *Gundam* robot, just one of the giant mecha the Japanese love so much; three young girls from *3x3 Eyes* – perfect examples of kawaii (or cuteness); one of the heroines of *Silent Möbius*' 'Attacked Mystification Police Dept.' (Japlish if ever we heard it); and last, a mobile suit (and pilot).

Venus Wars **features a fab cast of young unicyclists and a fairly complex invasion plot-line. Smart animation too. 8/10**

Things to come

Manga Video have some similar releases lined up. *3x3 Eyes*, starring a young non-human psychic girl, Pai, who's got (yes) three eyes, and is on a quest to become human through the mountains and streets of Tibet and Tokyo, should appear in February, to be followed shortly afterwards by the first part of the *Lensman* saga, based on the '50s sci-fi books of E Doc Smith. State of the art computer animation, and some accessible characters, make this potentially one of the most appealing Manga releases. Also expected soon are the live-action *Tetsuo*, a weird black-and-white high tech *Eraserhead* – not for the weak stomached – and the more recent, colour *Tetsuo 2: Body Hammer*. Tetsuo means 'Iron Man', and the films feature some of the weirdest, most disgusting special effects yet seen.

UNIVERSAL ADAPTORS

IS THE GAME ALMOST UP?

According to our reader survey results (see SP4), nearly half of you own adaptors so you can play foreign games on your predominantly UK Super Nintendos. Indeed, only 16% or so of you own a US or Jap machine, yet many more of you regularly buy import games. This being so, you'd treat it pretty seriously if you thought that soon – in a year or two, say – your ever-so-useful adaptor wouldn't work with any new foreign games, wouldn't you? The thing is, that could well turn out to be the case.

Let us explain. There are two ways Nintendo or other cartridge publishers can prevent you using a foreign game with a UK machine. First, they can put a security chip in the cart, as they all do. These stop you playing a foreign NTSC game on a UK PAL machine, but getting around them is easy – any one of at least a dozen readily available adaptors (check out the ads this issue for details) will allow your SNES to read the security chip off one cart but the game code off another, thus allowing you to play a foreign game on a UK machine. This currently works with 99% of all import games, with the newer model adaptors even coping happily with previously-problematic games like *Mario Kart*, *Axelay* and *Pilotwings*.

However, there's another way to stop you running foreign games on UK systems – one that doesn't involve security chips, and will defeat all adaptors. According to information we've received, a simple 4 byte program, included in the game code, will check that the game is running on the correct system – if it ain't, it won't run. A similar program, one which checks whether the code is being interfered with, will effectively stop Datel Action Replay or Game Genie cheat cartridges being used with the new games also.

Pretty shocking news, eh? The question has to be, then, if it's this easy, why haven't Nintendo done it, instead of mucking around with costly security chips? Perhaps it's because they simply haven't been bothered to – but they might in the near future. In particular, running small security programs in all their games would be a brilliant way to destroy the market for cheat carts like Game Genie and Action Replay. Nintendo as a whole don't care too much about grey import games coming into the UK – the sales lost are small beer to them. However, they *do* care a great deal about cheat carts. Game Genie, in particular, has been a thorn in Nintendo's side in America for some time – Nintendo have just embarked on their third court action against Game Genie's US publisher, Galoob. If this is as unsuccessful as previous ones have been, other ways to hurt the company may start to look very attractive.

For evidence that creating an NTSC game that won't work with adaptors is possible, check out the new *SWIV/Firepower 2000* release from UK developers Storm and US publisher Sunsoft. This game is the first import we've found that won't work with *any* adaptors, something Storm have managed with a simple program. The reason? 'So we can ensure that too many grey import copies of *Firepower 2000* don't come into the UK and spoil sales of the PAL version of *SWIV*,' say Storm. 'If we had a simultaneous release of the game worldwide this wouldn't have mattered, and we probably wouldn't have done it.'

Will other game producers follow Storm's lead? Will Nintendo insist that programs are included in game carts that'll stop Game Genies and Action Replays working with them? Will new adaptors come out that can defeat security programs? We'll keep you posted on developments, but the grey import market could change radically over the next few years.

Just a few of the many adaptors on the market. Could new protection programs mean their days are numbered?

The Game Genie – and the broadly similar Pro Action Replay – could easily be affected in much the same way.

● For an in-depth look at the Game Genie and Action Replay, what they can both do, which is best, and why Nintendo may want to get rid of them, turn to page 18. It's all there.

● For more on *SWIV*, check out the review of it we'll be running in the next issue (April) of *Super Play*.

THE BEST BOSS I EVER SAW!

End-of-level bosses can make or break a game. A boss that's imaginative, varied or plain hard to beat makes all the work struggling to meet him worthwhile. But which is the very best boss ever see in a SNES game? *Super Play*'s three main reviewers give their choices.

● What's the best Boss character you've ever fought in a SNES game? There's a *Super Play* T-shirt for the best three suggestions, with the most convincing arguments for your choice. Send to The Best Boss I Ever Saw, *Super Play*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

Warping space station

Super Aleste

'This fab end-of-level boss comes at the end of level seven of *Super Aleste*. It's a giant space station, which warps spectacularly in Mode 7 as you fly over it – a truly excellent effect, and one which stops people in their tracks when they see it. One of the most impressive Super Nintendo bosses ever.' Jason Brookes

Fire monster

Axelay

'The best bosses I've played against are in *Super Probotector/Contra 3* and *Axelay*. The ED-209 thing in *Axelay* is fab, but this giant fire thing from level five is the best – he's not hard to beat, but the minute he rises up out of a sea of flames and starts grabbing at you, you know you're in for something special.' Matt Bielby

Giant girl

Parodius

'This is my favourite. You meet her at the end of stage seven. Admittedly she doesn't do much – just lies there, really, throwing various smaller nasties at you, but she looks so cute as she does it, she just has to be my fave. Every time you shoot her she turns away and looks so sad you feel guilty doing it.' Jonathan Davies

BOOKS

There have now been more books written about the Super Nintendo than the Datsun 240Z. Jonathan Davies looks at the latest two.

SUPER NES GAMES SECRETS VOLUME 3

Rusel DeMaria, Zach Meston.
Prima Publishing, 290pp, £9.95.
ISBN 1-55958-249-9

Yikes! Vol. 2 last month and Vol. 3 this month. Maybe *Super Play* will have to go fortnightly to keep up.

What's really amazing about Vol. 3 is how up-to-date it is. *Axelay* gets a complete walk-through, as do *Prince of Persia* and *Joe and Mac*. There are games *Super Play*'s only just this second looked at, such as *Desert Strike*, *Mickey's Magical Quest* and *Death Valley Rally* (which all get complete player's guides), and even a couple that – eek! – we've yet to review: *Warp Speed* and *Universal Soldier*.

Now, this is all very well, but I am becoming a little worried that the authors are starting to get ahead of themselves. Cheat modes for the more recent games in the book are a little thin on the ground – these don't usually become generally known till a few month's after a game's release – and one or two entries seem rather superficial: the ones for *Amazing Tennis* and *Super Mario Kart* in particular.

But anyway. *The Super NES Games Secrets* books knock their competitors for six, and if you bought the first two, then buy this one as well.

AWESOME SUPER NINTENDO SECRETS

J Douglas Arnold.
Kuma Computers, 308pp, £9.95.
ISBN 0-7457-0216-3

Despite its unpleasantly Californian-sounding name, this book is actually published in Pangbourne, Berkshire. This makes a nice change from everything coming from across the Atlantic all the time, but tends to reinforce the idea that the Americans do everything bigger and better. The book's presentation isn't a patch on Prima's series, for example. The pages aren't very imaginatively laid out, and the print quality suggests they've come straight off a cheap laser printer. And the screen shots are so blurred they might as well not be there. On the whole, the book isn't as nice to 'have' as the *Games Secrets* ones – although its design is clearly 'inspired' by them.

It'll be dead useful, though. There's lots of information, including good guides to *Krusty*, *Mario* and *Zelda*, and, while a few more cheat modes might have been nice, there are plenty of passcodes and the book goes into lots of depth on each game. Altogether 21 games are covered, with extra tips on a further 22.

One of the better tips books around, then, but not *the* best.

These books can be bought in all half-decent bookshops or, failing that, from Computer Manuals Ltd, whose phone number is (021) 706 6000 and whose address is 50 James Road, Tyseley, Birmingham B11 2BA.

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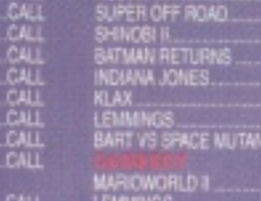

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SPIDERMAN & X MEN ..... CALL
SPACE MEGAFORCE ..... CALL
SMASH TV ..... CALL
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NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT TROLLEYS

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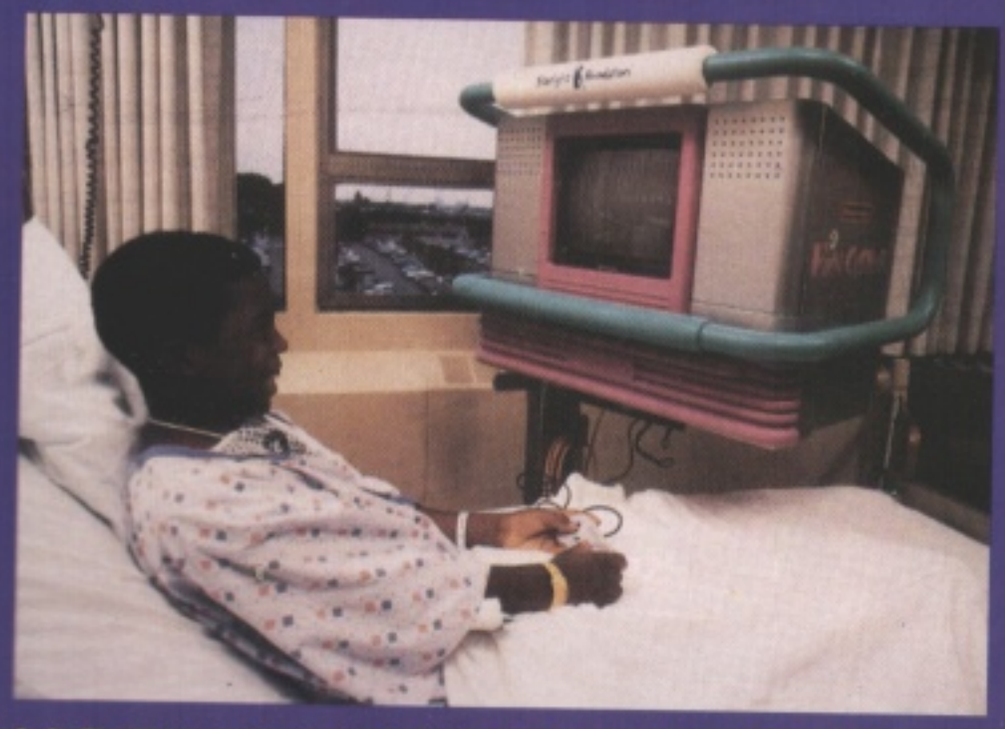
Seen the newspapers lately? News like the Nintendo/epilepsy scare currently doing the rounds is nothing new in America (see page 6), where Nintendo are trying to counter current health scare rumours with a program providing games for sick children in hospital. Nintendo Fun Centre's are self-contained entertainment trolleys, containing a Super Nintendo, a TV, a library of video games and a video recorder, which can be rolled right up to a patient's bed. Paid for half by Nintendo, and half by retailers local to each hospital, the Fun Centre's have been widely praised by hospital workers. 'It's a great distraction for the kids,' said the 'child life director' at Philadelphia Children's hospital. 'When prepping for surgery, children can concentrate on Super Nintendo to take their mind off their fears.' It's almost worth breaking a leg for!



Left: The Nintendo Fun Centre in all its glory – yes, it does look a bit like something out of Buck Rogers, but hey, if it makes the kids happy.
Above: And look, here it actually is, making a kid very happy indeed.

DATEBOOK

Guide to worldwide SNES releases

We've had to print this page in really tiny writing. That's because it's a complete list of all the games coming out around the world over the next couple of months. And there are so many of them, they wouldn't all have fitted in otherwise.

MONTH	DATE	GAME TITLE	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER	COUNTRY
Feb	5	Kitaro's Adventure	action	Bandai	Jap
Feb	early	Super Chinese World 2	RPG	Culture Brain	Jap
Feb	19	Doraemon: World of Faries	RPG	Epoc	Jap
Feb	19	Mah Jong	board game	POW	Jap
Feb	mid	The Steel Knight	RPG	Asmik	Jap
Feb	mid	F1 Grand Prix Part 2	driving game	Video System	Jap
Feb	late	Mother 2: Geeg's Rebellion	RPG	Nintendo	Jap
Feb	late	Bart's Nightmare	action	Acclaim	Jap
Feb	late	Sangokushi Spirits	strategy	Wolf Team	Jap
Feb	21	Star Fox	shoot-'em-up	Nintendo	Jap
Feb	26	Batman Returns	action	Konami	Jap
Feb	26	Nobunaga's Army	wargame	Angel	Jap
Feb	26	Battle Tech	strategy	Victor	Jap
Feb	26	Cosmo Gang : The Puzzle	puzzle	Namcot	Jap
Feb	–	Leading Company	strategy	Koei	Jap
Feb	–	Pro Football '93	sport	Electronic Arts	Jap
Feb	–	NBA Pro Basketball	sport	Electronic Arts	Jap
Feb	–	Sim Ant	strategy	Imagineer	Jap
Feb	–	Dragon's Lair	platform game	Data East	US
Feb	–	Cybernator	shoot-'em-up	Konami	US
Feb	–	Toys	action	Absolute	US
Feb	–	Shanghai 2	puzzle	Activision	US
Feb	–	Combatribes	action	Technos	US
Feb	–	Super Valis IV	action	Atlus	US
Feb	–	SD Great Battle	action	Bandai	US
Feb	–	Toxic Crusaders	action	Bandai	US
Feb	–	Sim Earth	simulation	FCI	US
Feb	–	Super Tom and Jerry	action	Hi-Tech	US
Feb	–	Carmen San Diego	RPG	Hi-Tech	US
Feb	–	Street Combat	beat-'em-up	Irem	US
Feb	–	Dungeon Master	RPG	JVC	US
Feb	–	Aerobiz	RPG	Koei	US
Feb	–	Buster Busts Loose (Tiny Toons)	action	Konami	US
Feb	–	Super Strike Eagle	flight sim	MicroProse	US
Feb	–	Cool World	action	Ocean	US
Feb	–	Radio Flyer	action	Ocean	US
Feb	–	Doomsday Warrior	action	Renovation	US
Feb	–	Dream Probe	action	Renovation	US
Feb	–	Hit The Ice	sports	Taito	US
Feb	–	Super NBA Basketball	sports	Tecmo	US
Feb	–	NHLPA Hockey	sports	Electronic Arts	UK
Feb	–	Alien 3	action	Acclaim	UK
Feb	–	Wing Commander	shoot-'em-up	Mindscape	UK
Feb	–	The Search For Wally	puzzle	Tomy	Jap
Feb	–	Sarc	puzzle	Tomy	Jap
Mar	5	F1 Exhaust Heat 2	driving	Seta	Jap
Mar	12	Edonokira	RPG	Micro World	Jap
Mar	12	Super Kick Boxing	sports	Electro Brain	Jap
Mar	12	2020 Baseball	sports	G Amusements	Jap
Mar	12	Ogre Battle	strategy	Quest	Jap
Mar	12	California Games II	sports	Hect	Jap
Mar	19	Nigel Mansell F1 Championship	driving	Infocom	Jap
Mar	19	Super Battletank	simulation	Pack-In Video	Jap
Mar	19	Jungle Wars 2	RPG	Pony Cannon	Jap
Mar	mid	Super Dunk Star	sports	Sammy	Jap
Mar	25	Wolf Deer BC Legend	strategy	Koei	Jap
Mar	26	Pop 'n' Twin Bee	shoot-'em-up	Konami	Jap
Mar	26	International Tennis Tour	sports	Micro World	Jap
Mar	26	Yoshi's Cookie	puzzle	Nintendo	Jap
Mar	26	Desert Strike	shoot-'em-up	EA Japan	Jap
Mar	late	Bio Metal	shoot-'em-up	Athena	Jap
Mar	late	Fortress Of Fury	action	Jaleco	Jap
Mar	–	Septentrion	action	Human	Jap
Mar	–	Debustitar	action	Micro World	Jap
Mar	–	Super Air Diver	action	Asmik	Jap
Mar	–	Wayne's World	action	THQ	US
Mar	–	FVO	simulation	Enix	US
Mar	–	Super Conflict	wargame	Vic Tokai	US
Mar	–	Inindo	RPG	Koei	US
Mar	–	Football Fury	sports	Sammy	US
Mar	–	First Samurai	platform	Kemco	US
Mar	–	Albert Odyssey	RPG	Sunsoft	Jap
Mar	–	Powermonger	strategy	Imagineer	Jap
Mar	–	Dead Dance	beat-'em-up	Jaleco	Jap
Mar	–	Tohaiden	–	Video System	Jap
Mar	–	The Blues Brothers	action	Kemco	Jap
Mar	–	USA Ice Hockey	sports	Jaleco	Jap
Mar	–	Metal Max 2	strategy	Data East	Jap
Mar	–	Devil's Course	sports	T&E Soft	Jap
Mar	–	Jo Jo's Big Adventure	action	Cobra Team	Jap
Mar	–	The Devil's Psychology Game	puzzle	Veicot	Jap
Mar	–	Noigia – Sea and Wind	strategy	Wolf Team	Jap
Mar	–	Dorapochan	sports	Naxat	Jap
Mar	–	Sumo	sports	Techmo	Jap
Mar	–	Dragonball Z (new)	RPG	Bandai	Jap
Mar	–	Silver Saga 2	RPG	Seta	Jap
Mar	–	Great Battle III	strategy	Banpresto	Jap
Mar	–	Ultra Seven	beat-'em-up	Bandai	Jap
Mar	–	John Madden '93	sports	Electronic Arts	UK
Mar	–	Super Star Wars	action	JVC	UK
Mar	–	Tiny Toons	platform	Konami	UK
Mar	–	Alien vs Predator	action	Activision	UK
Mar	–	Cycle Grand Prix	racing	Hudson Soft	UK
Mar	–	Gods	platform	Mindscape	UK
Mar	–	The Irem Skins Game	sports	Hudson Soft	UK
Mar	–	Mechwarrior	simulation	Activision	UK
Mar	–	Super Turrican	shoot-'em-up	Anco	UK
Mar	–	Nigel Mansell F1 Championship	driving	Gremlin	UK
Mar	–	Terminator 2	shoot-'em-up	Acclaim	UK

All information was believed to be correct at the time we went to press, but games are notorious for being delayed. Oh, and where we've missed bits out – game types or exact release dates – that's because the info wasn't available when the list was compiled.

CHART THROB

THE TOP TENS THAT COUNT!

Not one, not two, not three, not four, but... er, four (fooled you) charts, illustrating the sales of Super Nintendo games around the world. Check out how well your favourite games are doing...

OFFICIAL PENGUIN GALLUP UK CHARTS

▲ UP ▼ DOWN ▶ NON MOVER ★ NEW ENTRY

Compiled for *Super Play* by Gallup

1 ★ **SUPER MARIO KART** Nintendo
Hurrah! *Super Play*'s favourite ever game goes straight in at number one. 93%

2 ▶ **STREET FIGHTER II** Capcom
Its (minimal) decline has halted – will it be back at the top next month? 94%

3 ▼ **SUPER WWF WRESTLEMANIA** LJN
We're not quite sure why this is here, but at least it's not number one any more. 74%

4 ★ **BART'S NIGHTMARE** Acclaim
This got a mixed reception, but *Super Play* loved it unashamedly. 91%

5 ▲ **SUPER MARIO WORLD** Nintendo
Lots of new people must be realising this is a game they've simply got to have. 94%

6 ▲ **SUPER SOCCER** Nintendo
The best footy game on the SNES, and consequently a gigantic big seller. 83%

7 ▼ **ZELDA - A LINK TO THE PAST** Nintendo
Zelda's taken quite a plummet – a shame, as it's quite brilliant. 93%

8 ▲ **PILOTWINGS** Nintendo
Learn to fly on your Super Nintendo! (Erm, sort of.) 92%

9 ▶ **SUPER TENNIS** Nintendo
Top sporting action in what we reckon's the best sports game ever. 92%

10 ★ **SUPER GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS** Nintendo
It's super, and it's got lots of ghouls 'n' ghosts in it. 85%

We *told* you this was a fab game: *Mario Kart* is a new entry at number 1.

Bart's Nightmare: We liked it too, giving it 91%.

Super Ghouls 'n' Ghosts: You'll need oodles of patience with this one.

UK IMPORT CHARTS

Compiled for *Super Play* by Console Concepts

1 **SUPER STAR WARS** JVC (JAP)
2 **RANMA ½ PART 2** NCS Masiya (JAP)
3 **TINY TOON ADVENTURES** Konami (JAP)
4 **JAKI CRUSH PINBALL** Naxat (JAP)
5 **ASSAULT SUITS VALKEN** NCS Masiya (JAP)
6 **MICKEY'S MAGICAL QUEST** Capcom (US)
7 **FATAL FURY** Takara (Jap)
8 **SPIDERMAN & THE X-MEN** Acclaim (US)
9 **SPACE MEGAFORCE** Toho (US)
10 **ALIEN VS PREDATOR** IGS (JAP)

Super Star Wars.

Alien vs Predator.

Super Star Wars is still doing splendidly (although it's the Japanese version that's selling, rather than the horribly expensive American one), but otherwise it's pretty much all change from the UK chart last month. All the games *Super Play* has rated highly this month are selling well, as are a couple we haven't seen yet – *Ranma ½ Part 2* and *Alien vs Predator*, which we'll be looking at in the April issue of *Super Play*. We're intrigued by *Space Megaforce*'s performance, though – it's actually available officially in this country as *Super Aleste*.

JAPANESE CHARTS

Compiled for *Super Play* by Tai Ono

1 **FINAL FANTASY V** Square Soft
2 **SUPER MARIO KART** Nintendo
3 **DRAGON QUEST V** Enix
4 **ELFARIA** Hudson Soft
5 **JUVENILE HERO'S WORLD** Square Soft
6 **MICKEY'S MAGICAL QUEST** Capcom
7 **RANMA ½ PART 2** NCS Masiya
8 **SUPER FIRE PRO WRESTLING 2** Human
9 **STREET FIGHTER II** Capcom
10 **F1 GRAND PRIX 2** Video System

Elfaria from Hudson Soft.

Ranma ½ Part 2.

The top three slots in the Japanese chart remain unchanged this month – two RPGs and *Mario Kart*. That means the highest new entry is at number 4 – *Elfaria*, another RPG with some really great graphics. Number 5 is an RPG too (we're not absolutely sure about the translation of the name on that one, incidentally, but we've got as close as we could). But after that we're on more familiar ground, with *Ranma ½ Part 2*, *Super Fire Pro 2* and *F1 Grand Prix 2* being the newies. We'll be reviewing all of them in the next available issue.

AMERICAN CHARTS

Compiled for *Super Play* by Woody Carter

1 **SUPER STAR WARS** JVC
2 **SPIDERMAN & THE X-MEN** Acclaim
3 **STREET FIGHTER II** Capcom
4 **NHLPA HOCKEY** Electronic Arts
5 **JOHN MADDEN 93** Electronic Arts
6 **MICKEY'S MAGICAL QUEST** Capcom
7 **SPACE MEGAFORCE** Toho
8 **SUPER MARIO KART** Nintendo
9 **BULLS VS BLAZERS** Electronic Arts
10 **MARIO PAINT** Nintendo

Bulls vs Blazers.

John Madden '93.

While the Japanese charts are usually full of role playing games, the American ones tend to be dominated by sports games. This month is no exception, with three (hey – that's a lot) Electronic Arts Sport Network games doing well – *NHLPA Hockey*, *John Madden '93* and *Bulls vs Blazers*. Other than that, however, there's not really that much new going on. *Super Star Wars* is still at the top, with *Spiderman & The X-Men* making a predictable entry just beneath it. *Space Megaforce* is new – sort of. We know it better in the UK as *Super Aleste*.

SUPER PLAY Interview

JON HARE, Sensible Software

By Matt Bielby

Above: Jon Hare, graphic designer and head honcho at Sensible Software. Right: The rest of the motley Sensible crew in 'crap posing for a photo' shock.

ANOTHER OF OUR BIJOU CHAT-ETTES WITH LEADING LIGHTS OF THE SUPER NES INDUSTRY

What's one of the most often requested questions we get asked here at *Super Play*? When's *Sensible Soccer* coming out on Super Nintendo, that's what. To find out a definitive answer, we went to developers Sensible Software, and spoke to their main man, Jon Hare. This, then, is the whole story...

Q Okay, Jon – the first question has got to be, quite simply, when is *Sensible Soccer* coming out on Super Nintendo?

A Well, we're actually working on the game at the moment, with an estimated completion date of around March or April. I can't give you an exact release date yet though, because these things tend to have a life of their own. If it is in the first half of this year that'll be great, but it could turn out to be released in September, around the time people go back to school. I can't tell you who the publisher will be yet, unfortunately – the deal's nearly done, but it's not quite signed on the dotted line as yet.

The Amiga version of *Sensible Soccer*: the Super NES one is 'too rough' to show you a picture yet, but expect slightly bigger, cuter sprites, and a Jap-style front end.

Q And how does it differ to the fab Amiga version?

A It's weird, but though I thought the tiny graphics worked fine for the Amiga version, you feel, for some reason, that people just wouldn't go for them on Super Nintendo. For that reason we've console-ified the look of it a bit, with larger sprites running around the pitch. They're not too large though – that would have turned *Sensible Soccer* into a completely different game, and we didn't want to do that. The view of the pitch won't be changing, for instance – you'll still be able to see a lot of it at once.

The other big visual change we're making will be to the front end – we'll have some nice big pictures of hard looking men in football shirts, making it all a bit more like *Street Fighter II* in feel.

The other thing I'm intending is to make the game both easier for beginners and harder for experts. We'll do this by having a beginners' mode, where the ball sticks to your feet, for the new people, and a much harder game, with tougher players to go up against, for the experts. It's a bit like what we did with the extra Amiga 1.1 disk, but more exaggerated.

Q Do you think it'll be better than the Amiga version then?

A I hope so. Still, if it's only the same standard, we won't be doing too badly, will we?

Q What about the teams? Will they be all the European ones, as before?

A I think so, unless someone demands we put world teams in, to give the Americans and Japanese something to identify with.

Q What else are you working on for the Super Nintendo?

A Well, there's a SNES version of *Mega lo Mania* on the way – it's actually being programmed by some people in Japan for Imagineer, so we're not exactly sure how it's coming along, but it should be out by the Autumn. September should be the month we get both numbers one and two in the Super Nintendo charts, ha ha!

We've also got another, original Super Nintendo game provisionally scheduled for later this year, but I can't tell you very much more about that at the moment.

Q How do you find programming the Super Nintendo?

A Someone here just said it's 'like working on a C64 with fancy chips in it', and I'll go along with that.

Q Finally, any dream projects you'd like to do on the Super NES?

A Well, we're all big fans of *Zelda* here, so I've always fancied doing an adventure-type game in the same style, but that hasn't gone anywhere. The thing is, I think it'd take too long – we're currently trying to swear off all those long, involved project that take years to do, because you end up hating them by the end of it. Everybody starts getting on everyone else's nerves, and there's no guarantee you'll make any extra money out of it at the end of the day. Look at *Sensible Soccer*. That took eight months on the Amiga, while *Wizkid* and *Mega lo Mania* both took two years each – yet *Soccer* made us more money than the other two added together. We want to do more games like that – ones that are a good basic idea, which aren't all that hard to do, and which everyone is still enthusiastic about at the end of the day. That's the ideal.

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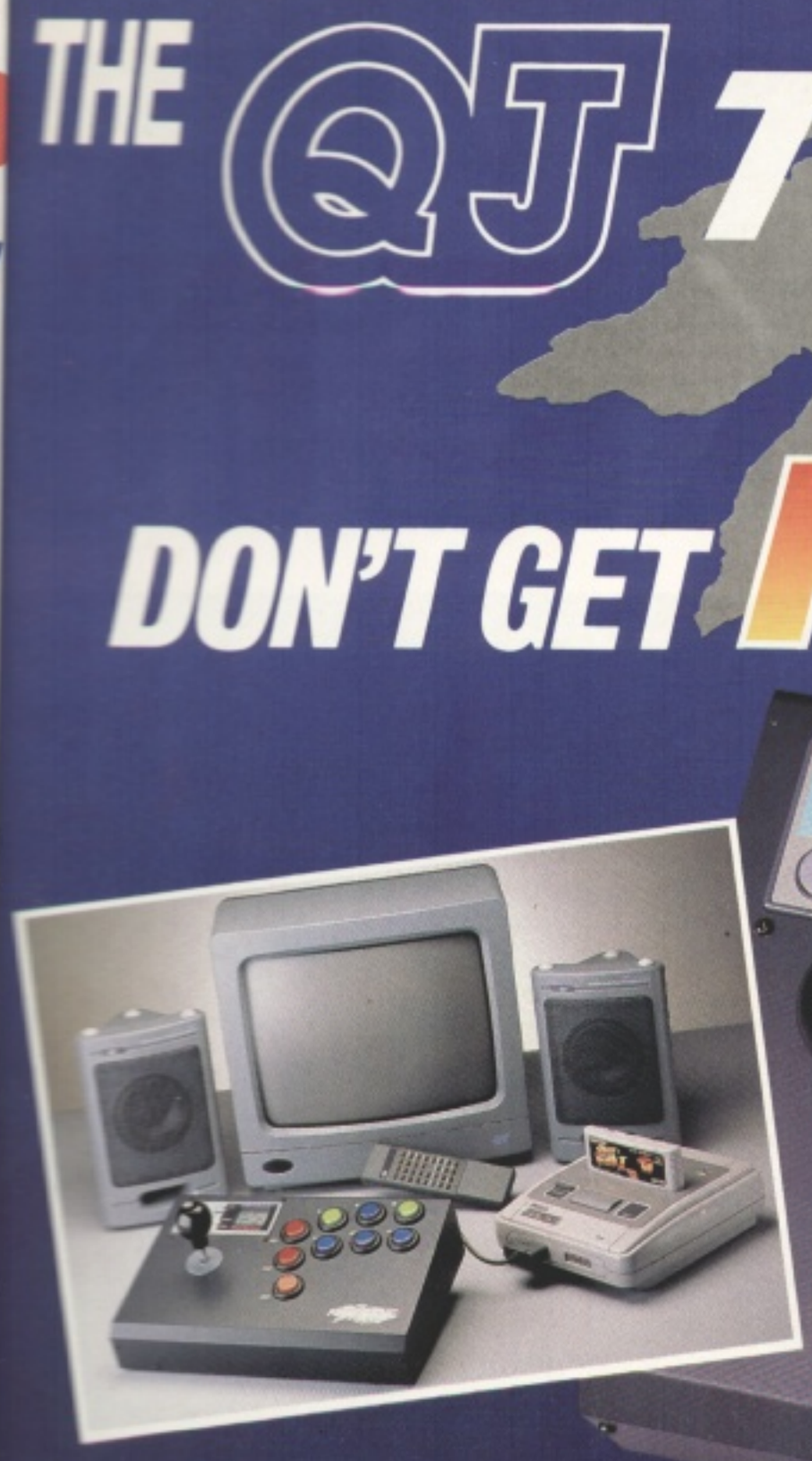

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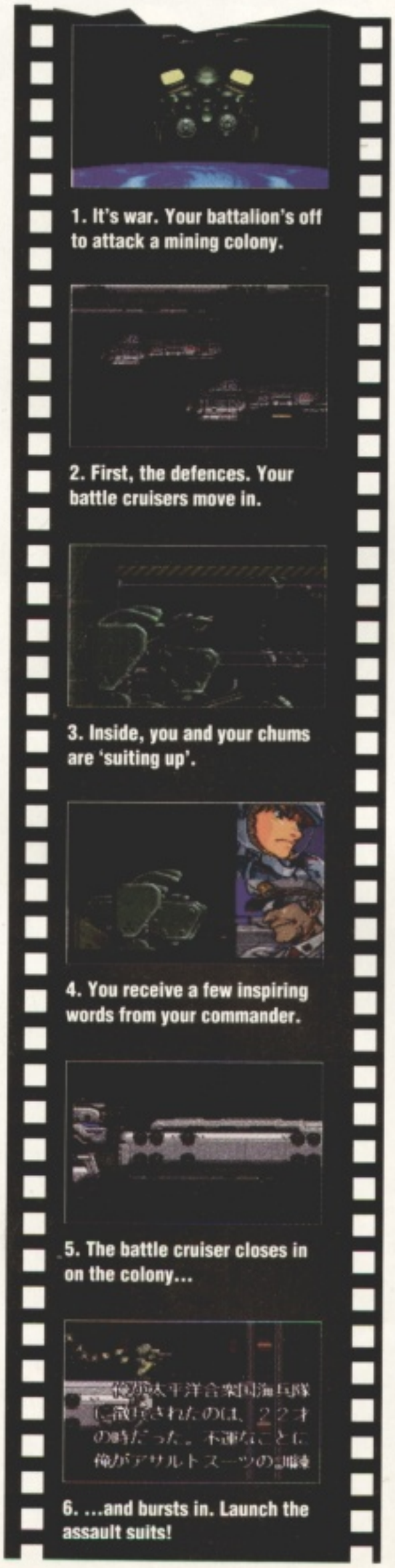
ASSAULT SUITS VALKEN

The Japanese are obsessed with destruction. Maybe it arose from the post-apocalyptic depression of Hiroshima. However, NCS – the Japanese producers of the destructive *Assault Suits Valken* – refused to comment.

Japanese Release

Game: Assault Suits Valken
Alternative name: Cybernator (US)
Publisher: NCS Masiya
Developer: In-house
Price: £50-60
Release: Out now/US:Feb/UK:TBA
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit



1. It's war. Your battalion's off to attack a mining colony.

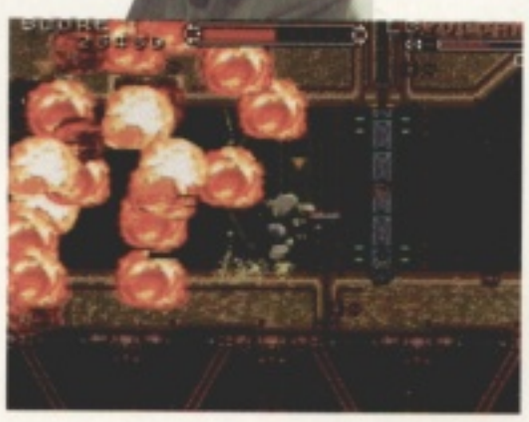
2. First, the defences. Your battle cruisers move in.

3. Inside, you and your chums are 'suiting up'.

4. You receive a few inspiring words from your commander.

5. The battle cruiser closes in on the colony...

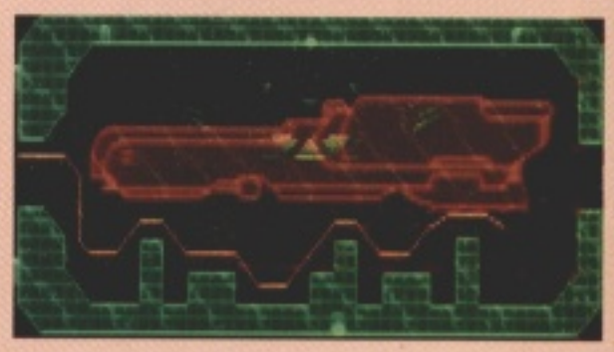
6. ...and bursts in. Launch the assault suits!



Assault Suits Valken is played over seven levels, each filled with giant robots and ever-more-impressive explosions.

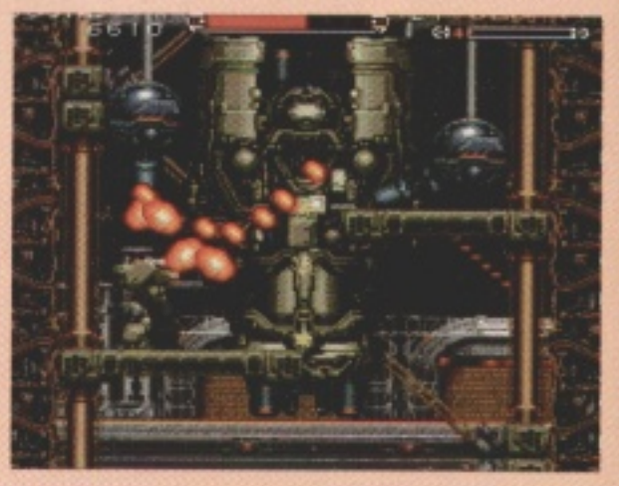
If King Harold had been wearing one of these, the outcome of the Battle of Hastings might have been very different indeed.

LEVEL ONE: HOT STUFF



Level one has you breaking into a hangar and destroying an enemy space cruiser.

After a quiet start, it quickly hots up – literally. Watch out for enemy assault suits!



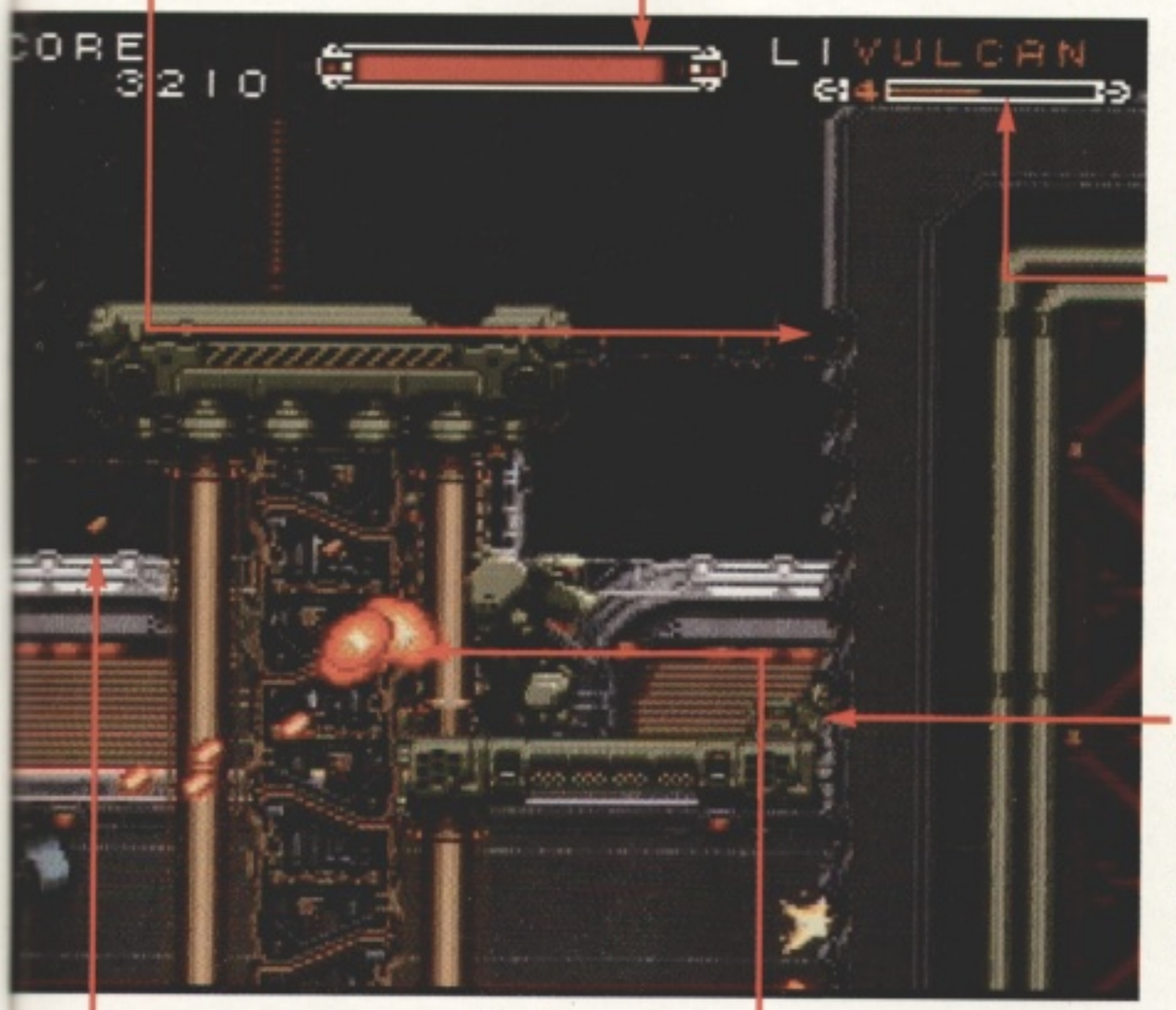
To round off the level, destroy the engine before it can be fitted to the space cruiser.

Pressing pause brings up a scanner, which shows part of the current level with a square indicating where abouts you are.

The quickest way to dispatch enemy assault suits is to punch them. But that means getting up close. Oo-er.

Stray shells tend to blow away parts of the scenery.

You've only got one life, but it lasts for ages thanks to this lengthy energy bar.



This bar indicates the number of rounds of ammo left in your current cartridge. When it runs out it takes a second or two to reload.

Blow up a rival assault suit and its operator will jump out and run away. (Sorry – he's hiding in the corner here so you can't see him very well.)

Spent cartridges are ejected from your suit.

Rarely a moment passes without a massive explosion happening somewhere or other.

THE CONTROLS

Being such complicated pieces of equipment, assault suits aren't the easiest things in the world to control. In fact, doing so involves every single button on the joypad, and lots of concentration.

Pressing L fixes the direction you fire in while you move around.

Holding down R gives you a shield which enemy bullets bounce off.

X selects your weapon. You start by being able to choose between punches and a vulcan cannon; on later levels you can pick up lasers and missiles. Weapons are upgradable in three stages.

Y is the fire button.

B kicks in your rocket booster, launching you into the air for a short time.

A is the 'dash' button, letting you slide along the ground and smash into baddies.

The direction pad moves you about as usual, and also moves your gun around (unless you're pressing L).

A PINCH ASSAULT

Assault Suits Valken **is a bit of a funny name for a game (which is perhaps why it's called *Cybernator* in the US, and will keep that name when it's launched in the UK).**

WHAT'S AN ASSAULT SUIT, EXACTLY?

Perhaps the first thing to make clear about assault suits (or mobile suits, as they're more commonly referred to) is their size. They're massive. Although they're roughly the same

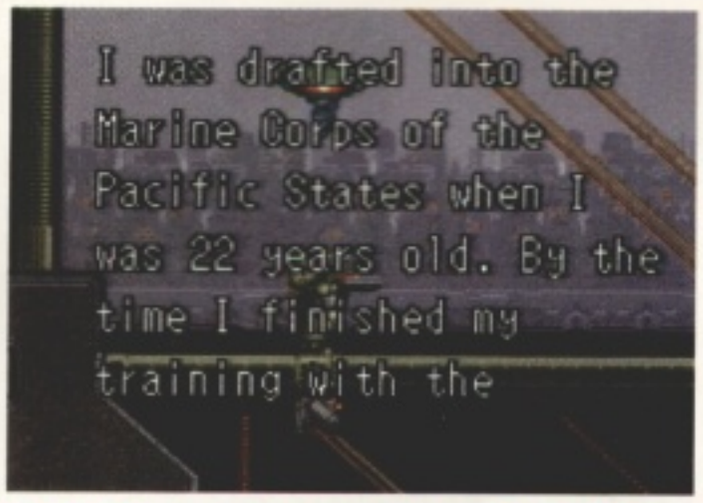
shape as a person, they're much bigger. Twenty times the size, say. That would make them pretty alarming things to meet in a dark alley. But, contrary to their appearance, they're not robots. They can't think for themselves. Instead they're more like exoskeletons, enhancing the abilities of their operator, who sits in the cockpit where the brain would be.

ENHANCING? HOW?

Well, for a start they can run really fast. They're also heavily armoured (so they're a bit like the modern equivalent of a suit of armour, in a way). They pack a formidable array of weaponry – guns, rockets, grenades etc – the exact composition of which varies from suit to suit. Oh, and they can fly.

COR. WHERE CAN I GET ONE?

Erm, well that's the only slight problem. Even Japanese technology hasn't yet quite reached the stage where it can manage this sort of thing, so for the time being assault suits exist only in anime films and comics, and games like this. You won't be able to pick up a Nissan 300 ZX Assault Suit for a while yet. Sorry.


I was drafted into the
Marine Corps of the
Pacific States when I
was 22 years old. By the
time I finished my
training with the

While the Japanese version of the game is perfectly playable, it might be worth trying to get hold of the US version (due out this month, and pictured above) or the UK version (which we won't be seeing till the Summer).

Here's a sneak preview of level four (there are seven levels altogether, remember), where you're walking along the ground fighting off enemy assault suits.

Some levels equip your suit with the ability to unleash lethal missiles. Look – there's one streaking off now.

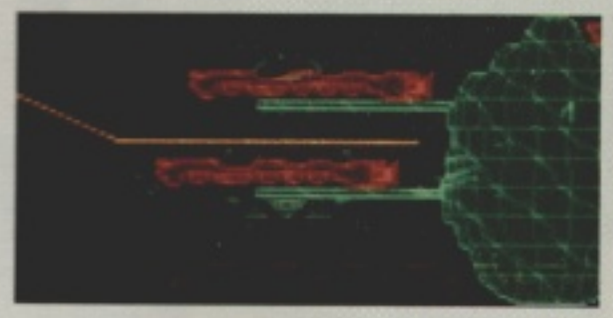
LEVEL TWO

On level two you strap on a jet propulsion unit and head off to attack a mining camp.

It scrolls blimming fast, making it tricky to dodge the massive rocks that fly past.

Which you'll probably need, as the boss at the end is rather heavily protected.

LEVEL THREE

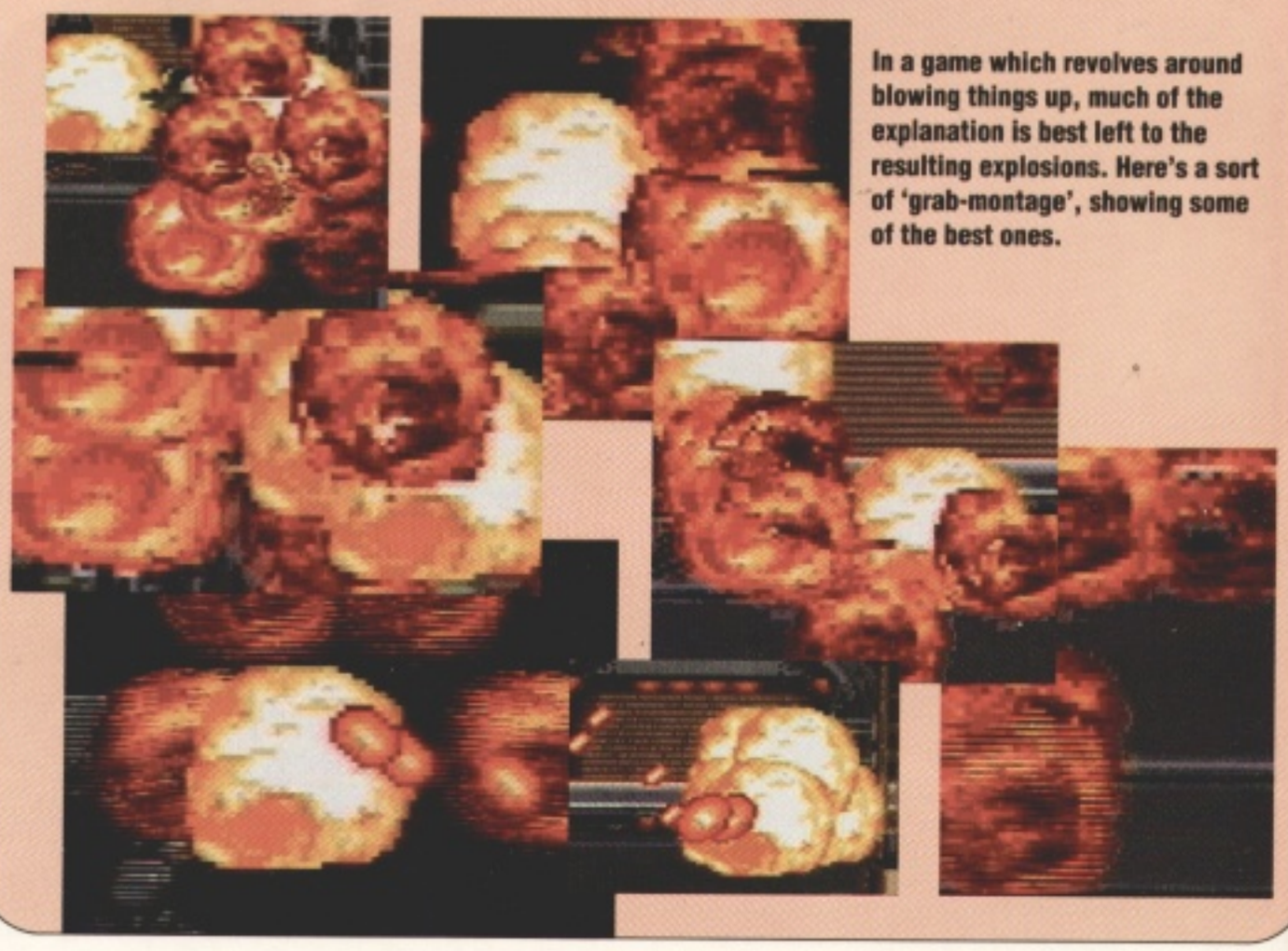


Level three. You're attacking a space station, and crashing to earth if you don't watch it.

Here you're walking around again. For the first time you can shoot people. Hurrah!

Fail to destroy the space station's engines and you'll find yourself plummeting to the ground.

BLOWING THINGS UP: YOUR HANDY GUIDE



In a game which revolves around blowing things up, much of the explanation is best left to the resulting explosions. Here's a sort of 'grab-montage', showing some of the best ones.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

Giant robots, eh? Don'tcha just love 'em? We certainly do, which is why we've got one on the cover. They're big, oily, menacing, and it would be great to own one. I mean, you could go stomping around the place knocking over houses and things (*Er – Ed*) and parking would be a doddle. (*Jason recently had his car towed away, which might explain this babble – Ed.*)

There have been quite a few robots games on the Super Famicom in Japan, but most are centred around the exploits of Gundam and associated SD characters in unfathomable Jap RPGs and strategy games. In other words, the games are either boring or unintelligible. Happily *Assault Suits Valken* redresses the balance with pure, unadulterated violence – and very slickly too. So slickly, in fact, that a very wise Konami have acquired the game for release in the States and Europe (under the title *Cybernator*).

The best things about *Valken* is the sheer variety of gameplay to be found within the blasting action, and the amount of thought and detail that's gone into the game's design. All six of the main buttons on the joypad serve a purpose, and, remarkably, the action never gets too complicated to handle. Sure, the game never deviates from the simple task of destroying the enemy, but enough variety has been added to this simple task to make for a fascinatingly compulsive game.

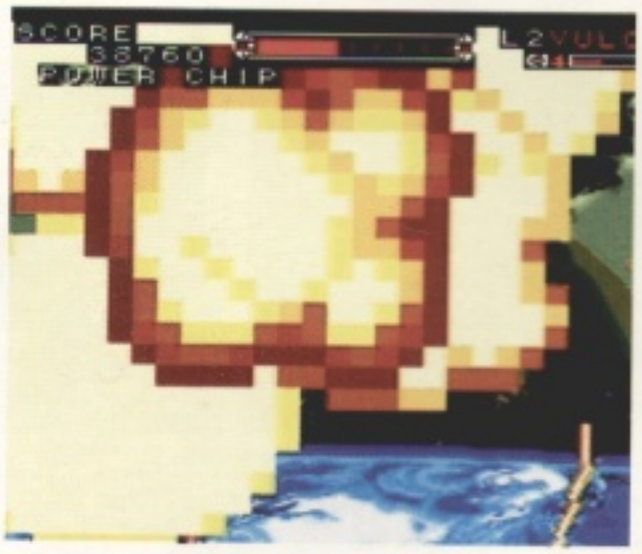
Graphically the game's spectacular too, with colourful metallic backdrops, and some great special effects. It's really well animated too, with some fabulous little touches. Sound is great too, with noisy explosions and smart clunking effects as your assault suit lands on the ground. Only the music is weak.

It all adds up to perhaps the most satisfying, fun shoot-'em-up I can remember playing. The only real criticism I can think of concerns that old bug-bear, lastability. With but seven levels, and increasingly powerful weapons, it won't take forever to finish. At least the programmers have been sensible enough to only include three continues, not the ridiculous infinite continues stuff which has been bugging games of late. In a word, then, brilliant, and a must-buy.

● Jason Brookes

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
91%	84%	92%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	91%
88%		

VERDICT: An engrossing, clever and extremely enjoyable shoot-'em-up. Fans of Japanese mecha will go absolutely ape over it, while everyone else will simply revel in its playability. Whichever category you fall into, you can't miss it.



Some of the explosions are absolutely huge, and will have you reeling back from the screen in terror. This one might look a bit chunky, but bear in mind that it's whizzing in and out of the screen at a fair old rate. Praise be to Mode 7.

Even the continue screen is smart, giving you a pilot's eye view, with the countdown whizzing in and out in 3D. You get two continues, incidentally, and – sensibly – the game won't let you continue if you die on level one.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

The really great thing about *Assault Suits Valken* is that playing it feels exactly like tramping about in a huge robotic exoskeleton blowing away baddies. And if you're not sure quite how that feels, you will be after you've played *Assault Suits Valken*. A circular argument? Possibly. But it'll make perfect sense once you've played the game.

It might take you a while to get to grips with the controls. Every button does something different, and the Japanese instructions aren't exactly enlightening on the subject. The robot doesn't behave quite as you'd expect it too, either. I was absolutely amazed when I discovered it could fly. But it's just like learning to drive, and soon becomes intuitive. And that's when the fun starts.

It's not just zooming around in an assault suit that makes *Valken* such a wonderful game. There's so much going on around you, and so much to engage the talents of your assault suit. There's never any shortage of things to shoot, and, watching all the other sprites leading their own independent existences, you get the feeling that you're stepping into their world and, well, blowing them all to kingdom come. And, coming back to the assault suit itself, the metallic clanking it makes and the spent cartridges that are ejected from it when you fire add immensely to the general air of satisfaction.

There were a couple of things that bothered me, though. First, how come sometimes your assault suit can only manage useless little jet-assisted jumps before it runs out of steam, while at other times it's quite happy flying through miles and miles of horizontally scrolling scenery? And, though Jason took great delight in shooting the little men, I couldn't help wishing they'd do something a little more exciting in return – a bit more in the way of histrionics.

Jason seemed a little worried about the game's lastability, in view of its brevity. But I'm not. Not only am I completely useless at this sort of thing, so it'll take me ages to finish, but I don't think I could ever get tired of flying round in an assault suit and blowing things up.

I was going to give *Assault Suits Valken* 91%, but Jason beat me to it so it'll have to make do with 90%.

● Jonathan Davies

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
88%	86%	90%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	90%
86%		

VERDICT: Absolutely brilliant. There's a real technological feel to it, and it's great fun to play. More assault suit games, please.

RUSHING BEAT RUN

Japanese Release

Game: Rushing Beat Run
Publisher: Jaleco
Developer: In-house
Price: £50-£60
Release: Out now
Players: 1 or 2 simultaneously
Cart ROM: 12 Mbit

...or *Rival Turf 2*, as it'll most likely be known when it reaches this country, is the sequel to *Rival Turf*. Simple, eh?

The game's only actually got about four different sorts of baddies in it – unless we're completely overlooking something significant. These men in exoskeletons are about the most impressive. And the hardest to kill. They take ages, in fact. Note the *Batman*-style 'crashes' and 'spaks'. ('Spaks'?)

Whereas *Rival Turf* only had two characters to choose from, *Rushing Beat Run* has five! In a two-player game, each player chooses a character, while in a one-player game you choose two and swap them.

Press 'A' and Lord J punches the ground, sending flames out on either side of him.

Kazan has the strangest special move – he splits in half and flies up into the air. Weird.

Norton's a bit sneaky – he's swiped the 100 hand slap off E Honda (out of *Street Fighter II*).

RUSHING BEAT: THE BATTLE PLAN

From what we can work out from the instructions (they're all in Japanese, as usual), the object of the game is to work your way through a city to an airport, and then try and stop a plane from taking off. (It's probably posing some terrible threat to humanity or something. You know how it is.) The game is split up into lots of stages, although where they actually stop and start is a pretty grey area. Every so often you're given a progress report, telling you where you are and what you've scored. Here are a few selected highlights.

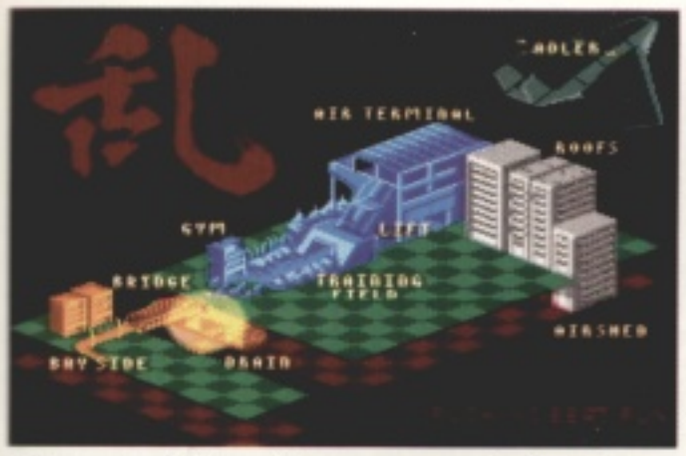
The game kicks off on a quiet-looking street. Pretty soon, though, you're fighting for your life.

After a brush with a helicopter, you find yourself in a sewer. The water flows quite nicely, but the baddies are just the same.

A bit later, and you're on a lift moving up the side of a building. Knock the baddies off the edge.

Here, Norton's found a hammer to knock the baddies about with. Try not to fall off the plank!

We're miles into the game, now, and taxi-ing in the background is the plane you've got to attack.



Between each stage, this map pops up to show you how you're doing.

If you want, you can take on another character in a one-on-one match. It's a bit crap, though, as you can't use any special moves.

Wendy, the game's token girl, does a weedy somersault kick. It gets the job done, though.

Bild does a fire punch – again, something that'll be familiar to *Street Fighter II* players.

The first boss is, er, Kazan. (One of your characters.) Um... Anyway, the room keeps spinning round in Mode 7, which is nice.

Wing-walking on a biplane is one thing, but on a stealth bomber? Yikes!

RUSHING BEAT RUN QUIZ!

DISCOVER YOUR TRUE SELF!
Here are some snapshots from *Rushing Beat Run*. Examine the list of captions beside each picture, and choose the one you think fits best. Then check the answers at the foot of the page.

Question 1

a) Eating food will increase your energy.
b) It's finger lickin' good!
c) This'll impress the birds – a chicken drumstick down me trousers!

Question 2

a) Two large men, having a fight.
b) You'll be 'wrestling' with this for hours!
c) Er, is this legal? In public?

Question 3

a) Here's another interesting type of hold.
b) Come on! Get a 'grip'!
c) This'll cost you extra, love.

Question 4

a) It's a fight to the death.
b) Hey, everybody, let's twist.
c) Eeh! Keep your wandering hands to yourself.

Question 5

a) Extra weapons can be found lying around.
b) Wahay! Let's 'club' the night away!
c) Erm... blimey!

Answers

So just what sort of a person are you? If you answered...
Mostly a's: You're taking life too seriously. Lighten up a bit.
Mostly b's: You're almost useless enough to write captions for *Super Play*.
Mostly c's: Tch! Shame on you.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

It wasn't going to be me reviewing this game, originally – Jason was going to do it. But unfortunately his pre-review research went a little too far. 'Go on, punch me,' he begged, 'right on the nose.' So we did. 'Oo-argh!' he exclaimed, and jotted something down in his notebook. 'Great, now I need an elbow to the stomach, if someone wouldn't mind.' We didn't. 'Oof!' Again he scribbled something in his notebook. 'Now grab my hair and knee me in the groin,' he suggested (with some effort) through the blood that was trickling down his chin. We hesitated, and then obliged. He groaned loudly, and made another note before collapsing in the corner. As he clearly wasn't going to be of much use to *Super Play* for the next week or two, *Rushing Beat Run* was handed over to me.

And I'm not a huge fan of scrolling beat-'em-ups, it has to be said. Unless serious preventive measures are taken, they tend to involve simply walking along for ages and ages past an endless series of pretty backgrounds, pressing all the buttons at random. That's what happened in *Rival Turf* and *Super Double Dragon*, and to a lesser extent in *Final Fight* and *Turtles*. And, unfortunately, it happens in *Rushing Beat Run* as well.

But before I take the hatchet to it, let's have a look at the game's more positive aspects. Two can play at once, which can be fun. The graphics are colourful and nicely designed, with some nifty backgrounds. There are attempts to break up the gameplay a bit – notably things like mines on the ground, holes in the floor and that gun you can pick up. In fact, as beat-'em-ups go this is a pretty good one. But, er, that's about it.

So, back to how boring it is. And it is extremely boring. The opposition consists of the same few opponents throughout the game – just like in *Rival Turf*. The gameplay never changes – just like *Rival Turf*. You tend to use the same few moves all the time – Just like *Rival Turf*. And you'll most likely complete the game on your first go – just like *Rival Turf*.

If you liked *Rival Turf*, then, here's more of the same, only slightly better. But the chances are you didn't, and you won't find this much fun at all.

● Jonathan Davies

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
80%	75%	49%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	
56%		60%

VERDICT: Well, it's another scrolling beat-'em-up, innit? It looks a bit smarter than most, but is just as boring as these things always are, and can only be recommended to committed fans.

TINY TOON ADVENTURES

They're massive in Japan, these pint-sized cartoon critters, and will no doubt be big over here soon too. Playing the game, it isn't hard to see why...

Japanese Release

Game: Tiny Toon Adventures
Publisher: Konami
Developer: In-house
Price: £50-60
Release: Out now/UK: March
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit

INTRODUCING THE TINY TOONS

(A cuter bunch of critters you never did see.)

BUSTER BUNNY

A sort of *Wonder Years* Bugs Bunny, Buster can do a big jump, a villain-squishing spin jump, crouch down, slide through narrow gaps and run super-fast in 'Dash' mode. He also does a little dance if you leave him standing around.

BABS BUNNY

Babs is some sort of cute, cheerleader-style girl version of Buster. She appears in lots of the intro scenes and one sub-game.

HAMPTON

Hampton is a young Porky Pig. He tells Buster what to do (in Japanese) a couple of times, and has his own sub level bit.

GOGO DODO

We've never seen him in any Warner Bros cartoons. You collect silver statues of Gogo to power up your Dash mode.

DIZZY DEVIL

A very lovable version of the Tasmanian Devil, obviously a close cousin of current TV and Mega Drive star, Taz Mania.

PLUCKY DUCK

Yep, despite his distinct greenness, this is Daffy Duck in all but name.

SHIRLEY THE LOON

Dunno about this one either. Any offers?

SWEETIE

Who could it be but – yes! – a young (and now, it seems, female) Tweety Pie?

MONTANA MAX

Could this, perhaps, be the son of the legendary Yosemite Sam? (Er, dunno. Maybe.)

FURRBALL

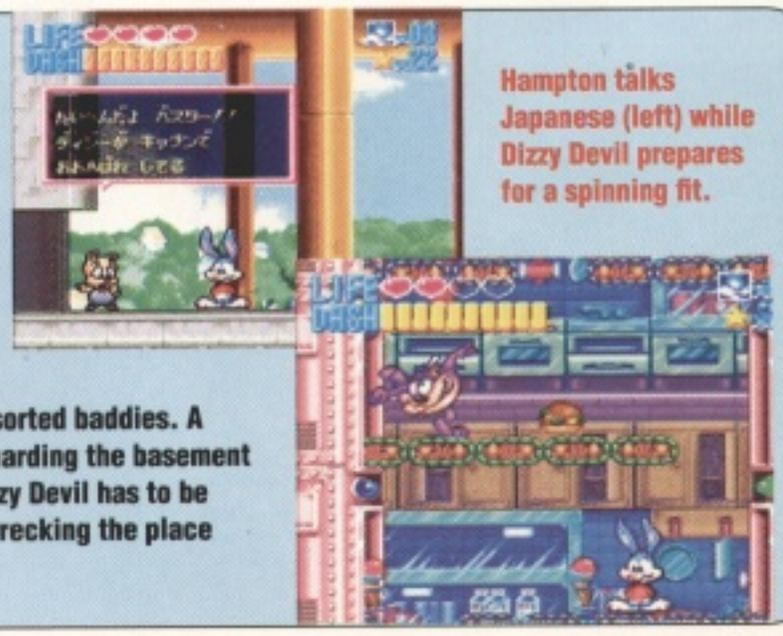
A cute version of Sylvester, the Tweety-Pie hating cat. Though I've yet to see them scrap at any point in the game.

ELMYRA

Montana Max's sister, maybe? (We're not quite sure who this one is either, to be honest.)

LEVEL 1: LOONIVERSITY CHALLENGE

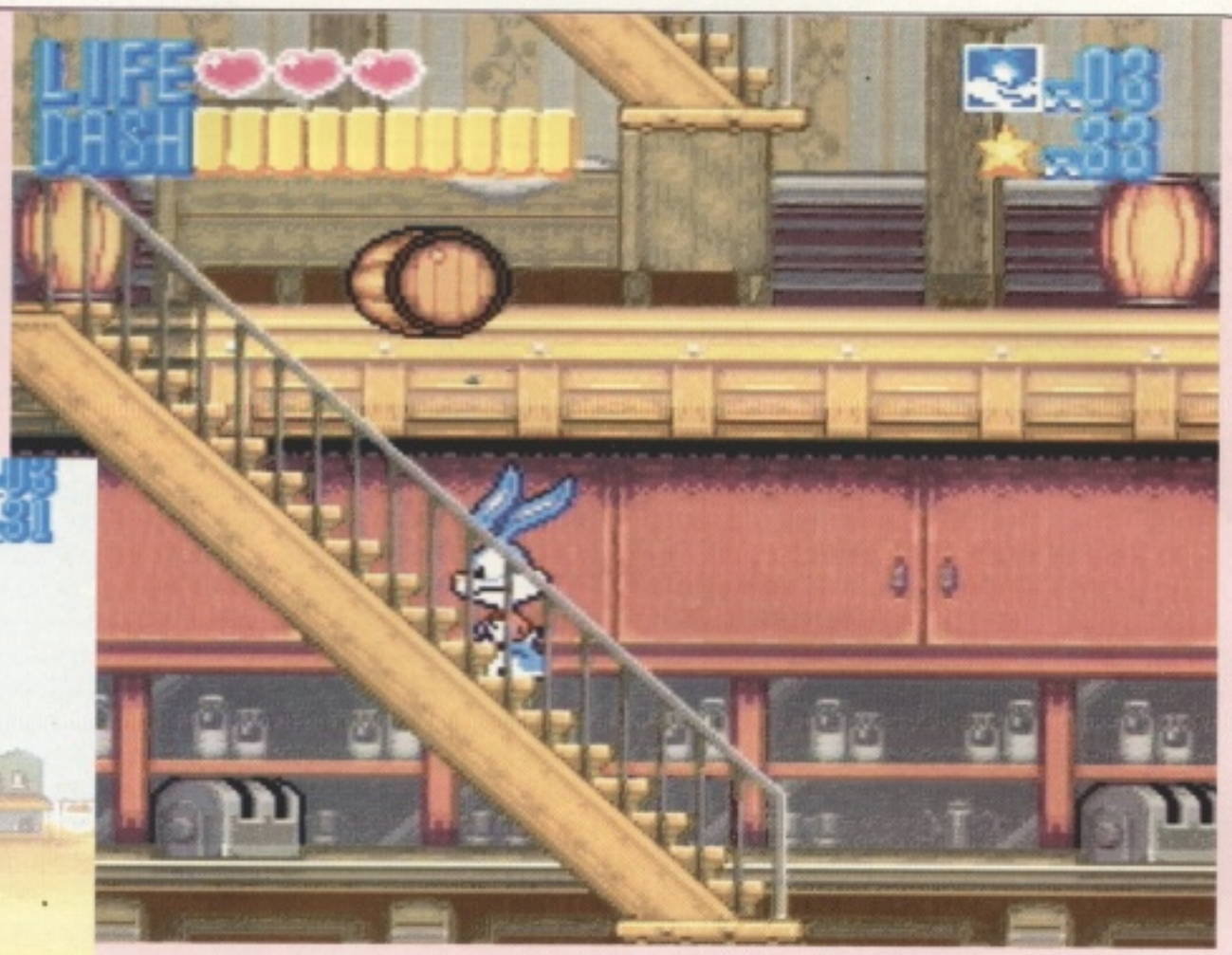
Kicking the game off as it means to go on, this level follows Buster Bunny's adventures as a big man on the Warner Brothers Looniversity campus. Vicious gangs of mice are the main baddies here, and Buster uses his 'Dash' powers to clamber up tall bookcases or leap across massive gaps, as well as his spinning kick ability to rid the screens of the mice, crabs, and other assorted baddies. A large white wolf (or is it a polar bear?) guarding the basement has to be dealt with at one point, and Dizzy Devil has to be stuffed full of food to prevent him from wrecking the place with his psychotic spinning.



Hampton talks Japanese (left) while Dizzy Devil prepares for a spinning fit.

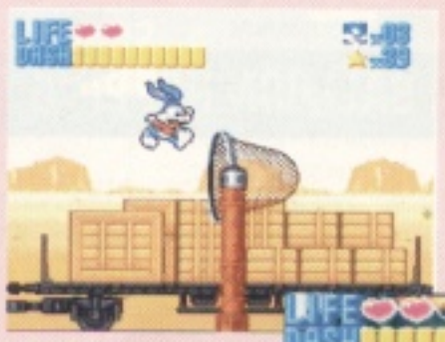
LEVEL 2: WESTERN RAILWAY

Much, much longer and harder than the first section, this leads you through a Western town (dodging vicious dogs, bucking mules, crazed vultures and, for some reason, rotten tomatoes) and into a saloon, where rolling barrels do their best to finish the job. In between there's a bizarre skipping rope section to master, and a (completely unintelligible) message from Montana Max to take in, before the second part of the section – the railroad ride. In this you must make your way along the roof and carriages of a speeding train, always aware that if you get scrolled backwards off the screen, you're dead. This is a very funny, imaginative sequence – and very hard. Some of the jumping sections, in particular, are dead tricky – one bit where you've got to hop across lumps of flying firewood still gives me nightmares – and the sections where you've got to use your 'Dash' ability take some getting used to too. The level ends with you on top of the locomotive itself, and (almost) home free. (Not quite, though – there's still the the steam-belching funnel to deal with.)



Bizarrely, the game suddenly throws you into this skipping (!) section.

These bits, which crop up occasionally, are really funny – you can't see Buster at all, just his bobbing ears, but have to fight baddies anyway.



Finally it's onto the engine for a quick dodge around the moving pistons, spurting steam and spinning wheels.

Dodge the bouncing barrels, which rattle down the stairs at you!

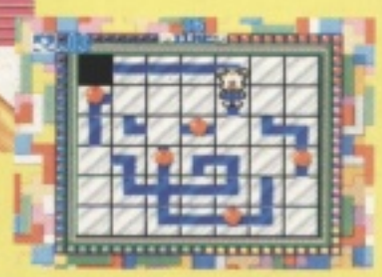
Jump the giant mail-catching nets (or, if you fancy, duck under them).

BONUS LEVELS: YOU WORK THEM OUT!

In between each level, Buster and Babs invite you to spin the 'Wheel O Game', a *Wheel Of Fortune*-type thing which stops at random on the faces of different *Tiny Toon* chums. You now get thrown into a sub-game to fit that character – Babs Bunny has to rush around a *Pac-man*-like maze, freeing kidnapped Toons; Dizzy Duck hosts a game of bingo; Furrball plays raquetball; Hampton plays some sort of strange moving tile game, and so on.

Above: Vanna White's nowhere to be seen as Babs and Buster spin that wheel!

Right: Hit the Toons as they dash across in this cute 'n' fab raquetball game.



Hampton's sub game is a sort of tile-pushing affair.

LEVEL 3: THE GHOST HOUSE

Gorgeous stained glass windows feature in the background of this lovely-looking level – one that reminded me of Ocean's *The Addams Family* a couple of times for some reason. It's prettier though, with the assorted ghosts you face being particularly scrummy. Gameplay mainly consists of dropping the giant ball bearings you find around the place onto assorted giant see-saws, bouncing you from platform to platform in true cartoon style.

Ghosts, giant hammers and burning fires abound in the ghost level – no wonder Buster looks so shocked!

This Frankenstein-like monster is level three's end-of-level boss.

LEVEL 4: FOOTBALL CRAZY

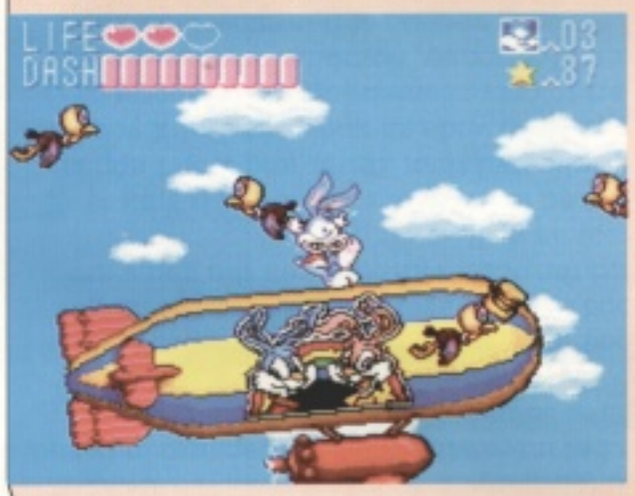
The game is in side view, like this. Now shall we run, or shall we pass...

At this point the game undertakes a strange change of pace – we're suddenly in a side-on presented American football game, with Buster, Plucky, Hampton and pals as the offensive team, and a bunch of cartoon rats as the baddies. If real American football games – things like *John Madden '93* – have never appealed you might groan at this, but in fact it's much, much more accessible, once you've worked out exactly what to do. Basically, you control Buster, and you've got to get the ball to the other end of the pitch in a set number of downs – you can do this either by running with it (and hoping you're able to jump over, or duck under, the defensive players who block your path), or kicking the ball, running forward to a point where you'll be able to catch it, then grabbing it and dashing forward some more. All you have to do is make one touchdown and it's on to the next level. (We found a mainly running-play based game works best, but you might reckon otherwise...)

Looks like we decided to run.

LEVEL 5: BALLOON HOPPING

Again, a complete change of pace. The idea here is to make your way up an ever scrolling-screen, done, initially, by leaping from balloon to balloon, though watch out – once you stand on them you'll find it's only seconds before they burst! Amiga fans may think it sounds similar in concept to *Bubble Dizzy*, and indeed it is, though that was nowhere near as pretty – or as varied. You see, this soon turns into a mad pinball game (with Buster as the ball) before mutating again into a section where you have to use your Dash powers to keep running up the sides of an inexorably scrolling screen. You can't say the game ain't full of variety...



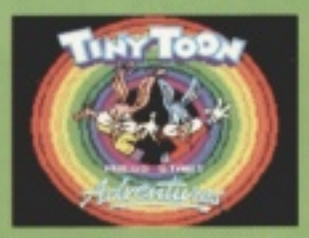
Yahh! Watch the birdies!

Ride the bubbles, leaping to the next one before they pop.

LEVEL 6: THE END'S IN SIGHT

Y'know, I feel a bit guilty about showing you all the good bits of an ace game like this, effectively spoiling them for you – so I'll just say that this final level features some funny little roboty things as baddies and... but no. You're just going to have to buy the game and find out about this bit for yourself!

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?



You'll have seen brief glimpses of these guys before – Peter Molyneux talked about them in issue 2, and we ran some cute pictures then. The *Tiny Toons* are, exactly as they sound, mini versions of cartoon characters, much like the Muppet Babies or the -chans and super deformed things we're always going on about in Anime World. To be more specific, they're mini versions of classic Warner Bros cartoon characters, people like Bugs Bunny, Wile E Coyote, Road Runner, and Daffy Duck.

And they're cute. Not just in the way they're drawn – which threatens to be sickly sweet but somehow isn't – but in the way they act and move too. Buster Bunny, for instance – the pint-sized Bugs lookalike – wobbles around impatiently when he's waiting for you to do something, which is guaranteed to crack you up. (I defy anyone not to break into a smile while watching this guy.) *Tiny Toon Adventures* is one of those games that, like Capcom's *Mickey's Magical Quest*, you can tell is going to be good stuff from the moment the attract sequence first pops up on screen.

It's also – like *Mickey's Magical Quest* – one of those games that changes in style from level to level. While most of it is platform-based, each section is distinctly different from what went before – it's often a complete surprise finding out what's next. The first 10 minutes, for instance, will see you dashing through the halls of 'Acme Looniversity', breaking into the basement of what looks like an art museum, meeting a *Tiny Toon* version of the Tasmanian Devil ('Dizzy Devil'), skipping over a skipping rope and running along the roof of a speeding train – a more varied collection you couldn't really hope for. (And level four, the American football bit, was a complete shock to me, see the box on the left.)

As if there weren't enough variety in the main game, *Tiny Toons* also gives you a selection of odd bonus levels – games that, to be honest, are going to take some effort on your part to work out, as all the instructions are in Japanese. There's a sort of maze-chase featuring the female Babs Bunny, another (but different) maze thing with Hampton (the Porky Pig-alike), an odd fruit machine effort with Plucky Duck and a selection of others – which one you have to do each time depends on a spinning *Wheel Of Fortune*-type affair, so it might take you many plays before you even *see* one particular sub-game, let alone manage to complete it.

There must be some things wrong with it though, surely? After all, isn't this the point in a review where we traditionally decide to undercut all the nice things we've said about a game with the inevitable, doom-laden 'but'? Well, yes it is – but for once I'm not going to. You see, contrary to all expectations, the game's *not* too easy. True, there aren't months of gameplay to it, but a limited number of continues, and the game's insistence on putting you back a fair way each time you die, combine to make it a lot trickier than we expected. It's certainly tougher than *Mickey Mouse*.

The big problem with it, I reckon, is that it all looks so sickly sweet. But I say try and put this prejudice behind you – you're going to miss out on a top-class game if you don't. The thing is (and you'll have to take my word for this) that it doesn't come across as sickly during play – just lovable. Office opinion differs as to whether this is better looking than *Mickey's Magical Quest* or not – Jason tends to think so, I don't – but we're all agreed that it's a close run thing. True, there's a fair amount of Japanese text so many of you will want to wait for the American version of the game (it's due soon, with a UK release in March), but that's your only real excuse for not considering this. This comes highly recommended then, not just the 'younger gameplayer', but for anyone who can stomach such cuddly graphics.

● Matt Bielby

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
92%	92%	90%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	89%
79%		

VERDICT: An absolutely gorgeous looking and fabulously presented cartoon platform game, with bags of imagination and enough tricky bits to keep you coming back for more. Superb.

Thanks to Game On, (081) 856 5282, for lending us this cart.

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VIVA LAS

LAS VEGAS CES, 7-10 JANUARY 1993

This January saw the US Winter Consumer Electronics Show, or CES, held in Las Vegas. This report has been put together from the experiences of six Future Publishing staff who made the trip.

Las Vegas is a real hell town: one of those places it's fun to visit, but you wouldn't want to live there. One reason the Americans choose to hold their Winter CES here is the sheer number of hotels the town boasts, enough to cope with any number of visitors. The problem is, nearly every one of them comes equipped with a lobby packed full of fruit machines, which rattle away right through the night – unless you're on the very top floor, sleep will come fitfully and in bursts, if at all.

Still, it's worth this discomfort to see the show – nothing you've ever been to will prepare you for the sheer scale of it. This is much bigger than the Summer CES, held in Chicago in June, and at least (at the *very* least) 10 times the size of the Future Entertainment Show held in London last year. True, only about a quarter of the show is devoted to computer and video games – the rest is other consumer electronics stuff from video cameras to karaoke machines – but that still leaves a mind-boggling amount that's directly relevant to us. Even more stunning was the sheer concentration of Super NES stuff – while some software houses had their stands elsewhere, the vast majority of Nintendo licencees were located in one vast (as big as the rest of the games part of the show put together) Nintendo Pavilion. Walking into it, we simply didn't know where to look first.

Yeah yeah, you're probably saying by now, but when all's said and done, what were the biggest things on show? Well, as far as we're concerned, two things dominated the show – *Star Fox* (mistakenly reported as *Star Force* last month), the Argonaut-developed 3D shoot-'em-up which is the first game to use the new Super F/X chip, and the new 3DO multi-media station. We've got special reports on both of those, as well as the rest of the show highlights.

STAR FOX: THE FIRST SUPER F/X GAME

Perhaps the biggest Super Nintendo related hit of the show was *Star Fox*, the first game developed using the new Super F/X game enhancement chip. A slick 3D shoot-'em-up, it wowed the crowds – Argonaut's head man Jez San, the brains behind both game and chip, could be seen walking around the show grinning, like the cat who'd got the cream.

The game is a first-person perspective shoot-'em-up, based in both the atmosphere of your home planet and in space. In the atmosphere sections, the skyscrapers scale towards you very impressively, while the asteroids and space debris you encounter 'up there' are equally impressive. It certainly makes previous Super NES 3D releases

Part of the promotional artwork for *Star Fox*, showing our canine hero himself, plus pals, all in cute animated puppet style.

Groovy map from *Star Fox*, showing the layout of the levels. There's a planet called Macbeth here, for some reason.

Whoa! Here're some whizzo in-game graphics from *Star Fox*, this one featuring some sort of giant spider thing (?)

Some more groovy *Star Fox* graphics, this time from one of the planetside, atmosphere-filled sections. Neat, eh?

(like *Race Drivin'*, say) look very sick indeed. At the show, *Star Fox* was shown off inside a huge dome, crammed with TVs on the inside walls – mega impressive, and amazingly smooth (even by top PC standards).

The plot goes something like this: what's happened is that evil Emperor Androv is planning to take over the mythical Rairatto solar system, and you've got to stop him. The twist is that the

GAME CITY, USA

Want some sort of idea of the sheer number of new SNES games on show at CES? Then check out the list at the end of this feature – it's massive. So massive, in fact, that there isn't the space here to do much more than just tell you very much about most of them. Just to stop you getting *too* frustrated, though, here's a selection of the hundreds of promotional fliers we picked up at the show. We'll be telling you more about this little lot over the next couple of months...

***Metal Jack* (Atlus)**

***Rock'n Roll Racing* (Interplay)**

***Obitus* (Bullet-Proof)**

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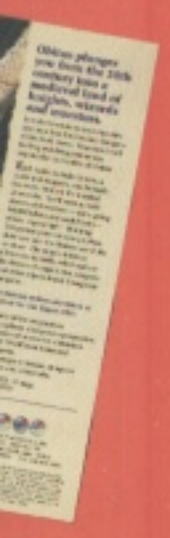


SUPER FX

Keep an eye out for the Super F/X logo – it'll appear on the boxes of all new games using the system.

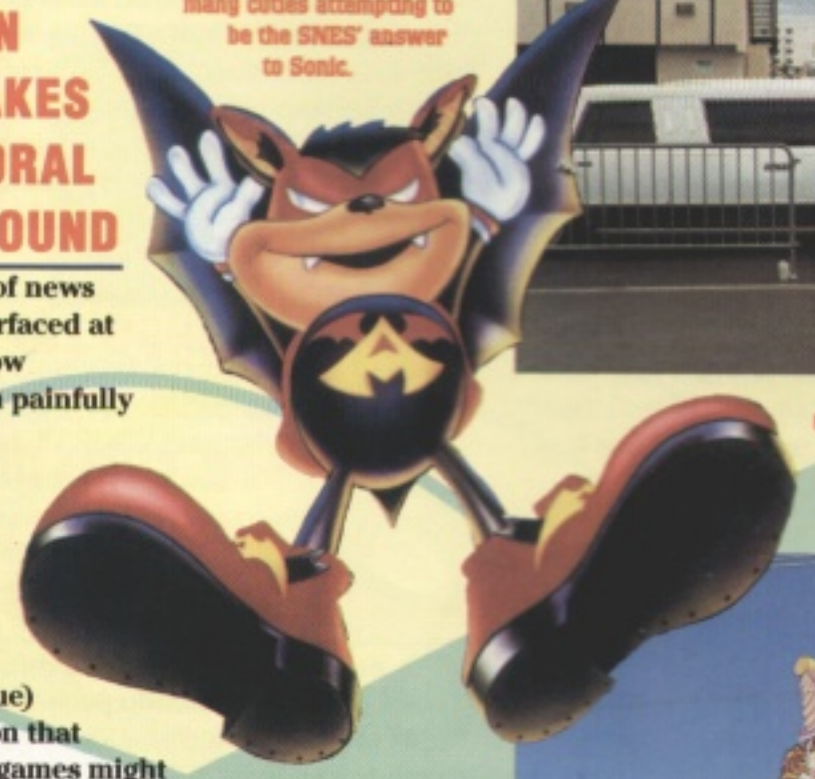
good guys are all animals – birds, rabbits, frogs and foxes – but ones who can fly space ships and planes. It's a bizarre combination of cutsy game, flight sim and *Afterburner*-style shoot-'em-up, majoring on those stunning Super F/X graphics. The US release is said to be imminent, so let's cross our fingers and hope it comes to the UK soon too, eh?

3DO INTERACTIVE MULTIPLAYER: THE FUTURE OF HOME ENTERTAINMENT?

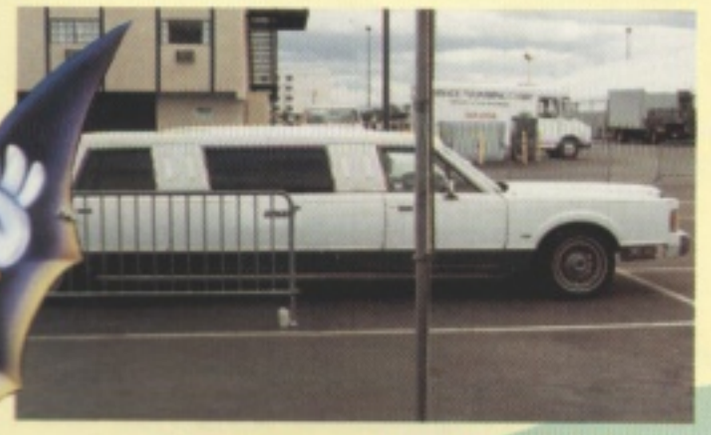
The big news of the show was of the launch of a new joint venture between some of the electronics industry's big boys. The 3DO Company, headed by Electronic Arts supremo Trip Hawkins, is a joint venture between Matsushita (the company who own Panasonic, Technics and others), Time Warner, MCA and EA to come up with 'a new consumer electronics standard for home multimedia systems, called the 3DO Interactive Multiplayer'. This will run from CDs, attach to your TV set, and ship in the States in '93 – Virgin, Ocean, Dynamix, Psygnosis, Maxis, Spectrum Holobyte (and, of course, EA) have all signed up to produce software, with more to come. The idea is to create a universally accepted CD-driven platform for the '90s, one to completely eclipse CD-I, CDTV, and any other rival systems that dare show their heads. No details on what the unit will look like exactly, or what the first software will be, but with so many heavy hitters behind it this is sure to be a big hit. Goodness knows when the 3DO system will be released in the UK, or how it'll shape up against the still-vague Nintendo CD, but rest assured – this ain't the last you've heard of 3DO by any means.

HUDSON SOFT TAKES THE MORAL HIGH GROUND

One bit of news that surfaced at the show will have been painfully familiar to anyone following the front pages of the UK papers recently (see page 6 this issue) – the suggestion that playing video games might actually harm people. It seems that Hudson Soft, in a bid to be seen as 'responsible', have issued a pamphlet aimed at parents, 'Master Higgins 10 Tips For Responsible Play', outlining some 'common-sense gaming rules'. These tips include 'Be firm in setting time limits; avoid banning video games from the home (so as not to drive kids to the arcades or their friends houses); make extended video game play a reward for good behaviour; encourage children to take breaks; and encourage other hobbies.' The booklet has become very well known in America, with Hudson (some would say cynically) backing it up with a release schedule of games like *Adventure Island III* (NES) and *Inspector Gadget* – products that seemed tailor-made to appeal to protective parents across the land.



Aero The Acrobat, one of many cuties attempting to be the SNES' answer to Sonic.



Giant Konami limo (above) ferried people around the show, out to the airport and so on. Circus Circus, the hotel we staged at (below).

NEW GAMES ANNOUNCED!

Of course, plenty of new games were announced at the show that haven't actually been completed yet, or at least weren't being shown to the public. Here's a quick round up of the highlights that struck us:

- Capcom announced they'll be doing a game based on the new Disney feature length cartoon, *Aladdin*. The game will be available towards the end of '93 (around the time of its UK release, though the film will have been out in the States for a good 10 months or so by then) and will feature all the

Super Pond **(American Softworks)**

Toxic Crusaders **(Bandai)**

Super Troll Land **(American Softworks)**

Street Combat **(IREM)**

major characters from the movie. Expect something at least as good as *Mickey's Magical Quest*. Before that, however, we should see Goofy in a game called *Goof Troop* – which is based on a Goofy TV show, apparently, and should be out around September. This game will also be from Capcom, and features an unusual top-down perspective, not unlike *Zelda* etc. Most of the people who saw it said it looked very impressive. Other Capcom releases announced at the show include *Super Mega Man* (based on the long running NES game series) for late 1993, Capcom's *MVP Football* (for March) and *Final Fight II* for September or thereabouts.

● Sony Imagesoft announced their Super Nintendo version of *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, based on the film, developed by Psygnosis and aimed at a Summer '93 release. The Sega CD version will come first, however, and is promised to be a spectacular mixture of digitised movie sequences and 'photo-realistic' graphics. Those people who have seen it says it's really impressive-looking We're not sure how much of this will survive to Super Nintendo, but it could be our first real 'interactive movie'.

Mario Bros, the movie! We think this shot must be from *before* our plumber pals turn into game creatures – either that, or there's been a radical costume rethink! Mario (Bob Hoskins) is on the left, Luigi is on the right.

More from the Mario movie: this *Blade Runner/Batman*-style street scene is presumably from the start of the film too.

MARIO THE MOVIE: IT'S FINISHED!

Remember the *Mario* movie, starring Bob Hoskins, which we featured in issue 1? Well, the finished film (or bits of it, anyway) was on show at the CES, and very impressive it looked too – the special effects were brilliant, and all who saw it seemed convinced it will be a real hit. The Americans get the film in the Summer, but it looks like we'll have to wait until next Christmas – a real shame. Curiously, most American critics don't give it much of a mention in their lists of major Summer films coming up – are they simply missing something big here, or do they know something we don't?

HOW NINTENDO ZAPPED AN AMERICAN INDUSTRY, CAPTURED YOUR DOLLARS AND ENSLAVED YOUR CHILDREN (THE BOOK)

One rather unusual – and decidedly non-official – Nintendo peripheral on show was the book *Game Over* (subtitle: How Nintendo Zapped An American Industry etc), published by Random House. Author David Sheff has apparently spent the last two years interviewing Nintendo executives in Japan, Europe, and the United States to build up perhaps the clearest picture yet of Nintendo, the company, in all its glories and failings. *Game Over* outlines Nintendo's rise, gives some great insight into its readiness to take on governments and destroy competitors, and suggests that Nintendo is now actually better poised to cash in on interactive multi-media than anyone – and that includes the new 3DO lot! Extracts from the book were being passed around the show, and were, according to some reports, consumed like the video game industry's equivalent of Andrew Morton's Princess Diana book.

Game Over will be published in the States in March at $25, though sadly there's no news as yet on when (or even whether) it'll make it over here.

Welcome to the house of fun! The way into the vast Nintendo pavilion starts beneath this gigantic Nintendo sign.

AND NOW THE BIT THAT YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR: THE NEW GAMES ON SHOW!

Of course, for Super Nintendo freaks, the main attraction had to be the hundreds of brand new games on show. There were so many newies there, we've only really got room to list the most exciting of them, company by company. Extra information can be found in the captions dotted about the place. Let's go:

For a start, there was *Toys* (based on the Robin Williams movie) and *Super Battletank* from Absolute; top beat-'em-up *Mortal Kombat* (really nice looking), *NFL Quarterback Club* (American football), *Super High Impact* (more American football), *WWF Super Wrestlemania 2*, *Alien 3* (up to the standards of *Super Probotector*, with great parallax), Acclaim's *World Cup Soccer*, and two *Terminator 2* games (*T2: Judgment Day*, a platform game, and *T2: The Arcade Game*, which uses the Super Scope), all from Acclaim; Accolade's new *WarpSpeed* and *Bubsy* (see page 10 in Super Express for more details), *Bubsy* causing a real stir;

G2 **(Kemco)**

Rocky Rodent **(IREM)**

Metal Marines **(Namco)**

American Gladiators **(Gametek)**

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Aliens vs Predator (okay looking), *Shanghai II* and *Mechwarrior* (interactive, like *Wing Commander*) from Activision; two *Might & Magic* games from American Sammy; *Super James Pond* and *Super Troll Land* from American Softworks; *Dominus* and *Spellcraft* from Ascii; *Run Sabre* (a *Strider*-like game), *Super Valis IV*, *MetalJack: Armoured Police* and *Super Widget* from Atlus; *SD: The Great Battle*, *Toxic Crusaders* and *Bazooka Blitzkrieg* (a new Super Scope game!) from Bandai America; *Yoshi's Cookie* and *Obitus* (the old Nintendo game) from Bullet-Proof Software; the amazing looking *Final Fight II* (featuring a guest appearance by Chun Li!) from Capcom; *Trolls* from Capstone; *Super Ninja Boy* (the American version of *Super Chinese World*) from Culture Brain; *Congo's Caper* (reviewed as *Caveman Ninja 2* this ish) and the D&D-style adventure *Shadow Run* from Data East; *California Games 2* from DTMC; *Legend Of The Ring* and *Future Zone* from Electro Brain; *BOB* (a sci-fi, character-led platform game) from Electronic Arts; *EVO* (a great evolution simulator) and *7th Rune* (also known as *7th Saga*, and referred to as *Ernald* last month) from Enix; *Ultima: The False Prophet* and *Sim Earth* from FCI; *American Gladiators* (yay!), *Kawasaki Caribbean Challenge* (a wet bike game), *Humans* and *Jeopardy!* from Gametek; *The Hunt For Red October*, *Harley's Humungous Adventure*, a nice looking *Tom & Jerry* and *Where In Time Is Carmen Santiego?* from Hi Tech; *The Black Bass* (a bleeding fishing game!) from Hot B; *Super Bomberman*, *World Class Volley* and *Battle Grand Prix* from Hudson Soft; *Shadow Of The Beast* from IGS; *Rock 'n Roll Racing*, *Claymates*, *Lost Vikings* and *The Lord Of The Rings* from Interplay; *Rocky Rodent* (a bit like *Dinosaurs*, but better) and *Street Combat* from Irem; *Utopia* (the old Gremlin *Populous*-alike, now using the Super NES mouse you get with *Mario Paint*) from Jaleco; *Chester Cheetah* (reviewed next issue) from Kaneko; *Top Gear 2*, *First Samurai*, *G2* (a robot-based Mode 7 action game) and *X-Zone* from Kemco; *Inindo: The Way Of The Ninja*, *Uncharted Waters* and *Aerobiz* from Koei; *Cybernator*, *Tiny Toons* and *Batman Returns* (sort of *Final Fight*-like in style!) from Konami; *Super Empire Strikes Back* (sequel to the just-released *Super Star Wars – Return Of The Jedi* is also planned!) from LucasArts; MicroProse's *Super Strike Eagle* and *Railroad Tycoon*; *Battle Cars* and *Metal Marines* from Namco; *Pocky & Rocky* from Natsume; *Vegas Stakes* (a topical gambling game) from Nintendo themselves; *Radio Flyer* and *The Untouchables* (just the title screen shown) from Ocean; *Jerry Glanville's Pigskin Football* from Razorsoft; *Doomsday Warrior*, *Dream Probe* and (ex-Mega Drive RPG) *Arcus Odyssey* from Renovation; *Super Aquatic Games* (the *James Pond*

Three of the big hit games, clockwise from top left: *Doomsday Warrior*, distinctive graphics from *Wayne's World* (the game) and *Super Turrican*.

thing), *Super Turrican* and *Super Troddlers* from Seika; *Wizard Of Oz* (especially designed for younger players), *F1 ROC 2* (smooth and fast), the OK *Alice In Wonderland* platform game and *Makendo* from Seta; *Smartball* and *Equinox* (by British-based Software Creations) from Sony Imagesoft; the Bitmaps' *Gods* and *Terminator* from Software Toolworks; *Wordtris* and *Star Trek: The Next Generation* from Spectrum Holybyte; *Final Fantasy II* from Square; *Taz-Mania* (not the same as the Mega Drive game – this one is a 3D scrolling Mode 7 version!), *Superman*, *Duck Dodgers In The 241/2 Century* (terrible pun!) and *Aero The Acrobat* from Sunsoft; *Hit The Ice* (a blocky, poor quality ice hockey game) from Taito; *Wayne's World*, *Family Dog* (based on a US cartoon), *Rocky & Bullwinkle* (based on a US newspaper comic strip), *Swamp Thing*, *Thomas The Tank Engine* (!), *Ren & Stimpy*, and *Sports Illustrated: Football* and *Sports Illustrated: Baseball* from THQ; *Lamborghini American Challenge* (nice looking, smoother than *Top Gear* single player racing game, but still in an early stage) from Titus; *Mecarobot Golf* from Toho; *Pro Quarterback* and *Battletoads* from Tradewest; *Imperium*, *Time Slip* (a crap *Super Contra* type thing), *Lost Mission* and *Super Conflict* from Vic Tokai and finally *Super Slam Dunk* from Virgin.

And that was the Consumer Electronics Show. It ain't over yet, though – over the next few months we'll be going into more detail on many of the games mentioned here, as well reporting other CES stories we couldn't fit in. Stay tuned!

Could that be Mega Man in the flesh? Or could it be some poor gimp in a costume? Who can tell? (right). MicroProse's *Super Strike Eagle* takes off (below).

Yoshi's Cookie, a *Tetris*-lookalike featuring Mario's dino pal, is one of those games you know will be a hit.

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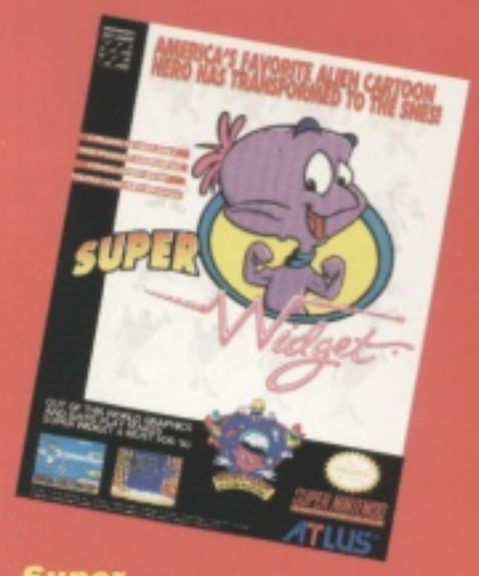
Mechwarrior **(Activision)**



Super Widget **(Atlus)**

Bazooka Blitzkreig **(Bandai)**

Toys **(Absolute)**

SUPER PARODIUS

UK Release

Game: Super Parodius
Publisher: Konami
Developer: In-house
Price: £45
Release: February
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit

Who else but the Japanese could bring together a pink octopus, some can-can-dancing lips, a giant parrot and a spaceship that looks like it's escaped from Easter Island – and not end up with a complete disaster?

You know *Super Parodius* is going to be weird when, seconds into the game, you encounter this cat/ship-type thing.

It seems a real shame, but you've got to shoot her. (Besides, she keeps throwing things at you.)

A babe in a bubble! (*Don't you mean 'a person of female persuasion'? – Traci.*) She makes a really sad noise when you shoot her, and tumbles to earth.

This bit's good. You've got a choice of three ways to go, and you need to pick the one with more pigs than skeletons – and fast.

The Omake Stage is a short bonus level, separate from the main game, where you basically try to score as much as you possibly can.

This is, in many ways, the weirdest level of the lot. You're flying through a graveyard, and it starts raining, and your ship sprouts an umbrella!

What game would be complete without an ice caverns level? (Although it's a bit hard to tell, the floor's probably very slippery, too.)

THE FACE THAT LAUNCHED, ER, FOUR SHIPS

Parodius gives you four different ships to choose between. They each have a different range of weapons and (some would say) a different personality.

Vic Viper will be familiar to *Gradius III* players – it's the ship they know and love, complete with some useful lasers.

Twin Bee has two great weapons – the rocket punch and the three-way – making him *Super Play*'s all-round favourite ship.

Octopus, as well as having eight legs, boasts a powerful ripple cannon.

Pentarou looks uncannily like the penguins that blight your progress.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

Parodius is not meant to be taken seriously. It got its name because it's a parody of *Gradius*, Konami's long-running series of shoot-'em-ups. And, unusually for a video game, it is actually quite funny.

And that's not all. It's got smashing graphics – big, colourful sprites and great backgrounds. It's got some some of the best music in the business – boppy re-mixes of classical favourites. And it plays really well, too. Each level has been cunningly laid out and there are hundreds of original ideas for a shoot-'em-up. And it's one of those games where you've got to work out the best ways to get through certain parts, and then you'll get stuck again slightly further on, making it addictive.

Now, I know that *Parodius* has become something of an international institution (it's been out in Japan for ages), and saying anything against it – aside from 'the infinite continues make it too easy' – is akin to insulting the Queen Mum. But, having been reunited with *Parodius* after a break of several months, I did find the game ever so slightly (dare I say) boring and predictable.

Anyway, I'd better pick up that party line again, in case I get struck by lightning, or find myself with a fatwah on my head. *Parodius* is one of the best shoot-'em-ups ever. It's unique.

● Jonathan Davies

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
91%	92%	90%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	86%
77%		

VERDICT: A very funny, imaginative and ridiculously good fun shoot-'em-up. But then *Super Parodius* gets most of its marks for being funny, imaginative and ridiculously good fun, rather than for having much lastability.

WING COMMANDER

The celebrated PC blaster-cum-interactive movie arrives on the SNES, with remarkably little of the gameplay taken away. The problem is, was there ever that much there in the first place...?

UK Release

Game: Wing Commander
Publisher: Mindscape
Developer: In-house (PC original: Chris Roberts)
Price: Approx. £45
Release: Out now
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit

THE FIRST SUPER NINTENDO INTERACTIVE MOVIE?

Well, sort of – it's more of an extended intro sequence. Here're some of the best bits, including your chat (adventure game style) with a couple of pilots in the bar, and the attack-on-the-Death-Star style mission briefing.

Now this is weird, a simulation within a simulation. Basically you get to practise dogfights a bit on this coin-op device you'll find in the bar – this way you'll learn not to make a few of the more obvious dogfighting mistakes.

Here's a Kilrathi space ship, lined up directly in your sights. (As in *Battlestar Galactica*, the good guy ships look like jet planes, the bad guys like flying saucers.)

This animated hand moves the joystick as you move your ship. Otherwise, the only movement is in the top half of the screen.

This central scanner shows your target areas, and allows you to guide your ship, while fuel and shield indicators flank it.

Diagrams of both types of space ship, with weapons highlighted, appear at the sides here.

IT'S ALMOST WORTH DYING...

...when you get this sort of epic send off! First there's a fairly nice explosion sequence to be enjoyed (left) – you explode, then you see an exterior view of your ship doing the same thing – followed by an animated space funeral affair...

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

The problem with reviewing *Wing Commander* is that it's one of those games that, like *Kick Off*, was such a hit when released on its original format (the PC) that it's almost heresy to say anything bad about it. But, when you look at it, it isn't that good.

But why? Well, there's the interactive movie aspect to be dealt with. This stuff – mainly consisting of adventure-game style chats with fellow pilots and the odd bridging sequence – may have been impressive in its time, but what you get here we've seen 1,000 times before. It's fun, and does work to build up the atmosphere, but it's hardly any more an interactive movie than, ooh, *Pilotwings*.

Then there's the meat of the game – a 3D space shoot-'em-up, pitting you and your wingmen in a *Top Gun*-typesituation against Kilrathi (alien cat monsters) space ships.. These sequences lack the assorted viewpoints you got on the PC (or, indeed, Amiga) versions, but are otherwise a fair depiction of the action from the original – I wonder if the that wasn't over-rated in the first place.

All that said, of course, there are die-hard fans out there who really like it. If you loved the space battle bits out of *Elite*, if you're eagerly awaiting Accolade's nearly identical *Warp Speed*, if you adored the PC original, then you'll love this – it's almost the same game. For others, though, play before you pay – I suspect you'll be rather disappointed.

● Matt Bielby

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
76%	70%	58%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	60%
61%		

VERDICT: It's a solid representation of the PC original considering the Super NES's 3D limitations, so fans will love it. However, we can't help feeling the original was vastly over-rated, translating into a very average Super Nintendo game.

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SUPER TETRIS + BOMBLISS

Japanese Release

Game: Super Tetris 2 + Bombliss
Publisher: Bullet-Proof Software
Developer: In-house
Price: Approx. £50-£60
Release: Out now
Players: 1 or 2 simultaneously
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit + BB

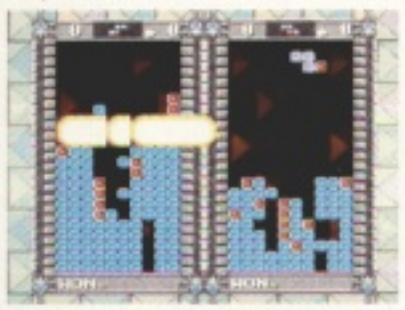
Incredibly, even though *Tetris* is the most popular puzzle game in the whole world, there isn't a version of it on the SNES. (Well, not until now anyway.)

In case you've spent the last five years as a missionary in the Amazon jungle, here's how *Tetris* works. Coloured blocks float down the screen, and as they fall you can rotate and move them from side to side so they'll slot in as neatly as possible at the bottom of the screen. Each time you fill up a horizontal line, it disappears. The more lines you complete, the faster the blocks fall, until it all goes wrong and the whole screen starts filling up and it's really horrible.

BOMBLISS: IT'S DYNAMITE!

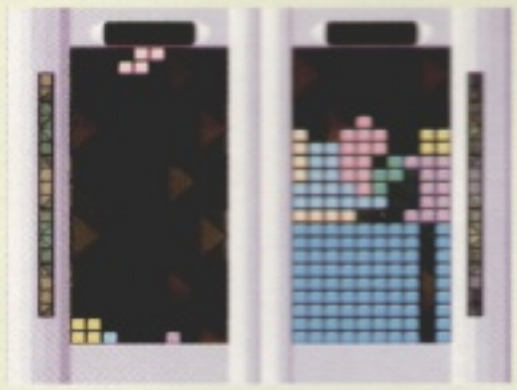
Then there's *Bombliss*, which is basically *Tetris* with bombs in. When you fill up a horizontal line, any bombs (the red blobs) in that line explode, blowing up adjacent squares.

Arrange four bombs into a square and they'll turn into a really giant bomb. Make sure you retire to a safe distance before triggering it, though.



Look – two-player *Bombliss*! It works the same as two-player *Tetris*, with every line you blow up getting added to your opponent's stack.

Puzzle *Bombliss* gives you patterns of squares and a set number of blocks to clear the screen with. Needless to say, the puzzles start off easy and get harder.



With two players, each time one player completes a line the other has a line added to his pile.

In *Tetris* Game B, the screen starts off partly filled in and you've got to take it from there. (Which is quite a bit harder.)

In *Tetris* Game C, on the other hand, the computer has a tendency to add blocks at the bottom of the screen every so often. (The bounder.)

Playing the game on level 17 is simply asking for trouble.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

Tetris was discovered (rather than invented) in 1987 by a Russian gentleman called Alexey Pajitnov. That's why some versions of the game tend to have lots of Cossacks and Cyrillic script knocking around in them. As with other Russian things, like Ladas and vodka, *Tetris*'s appeal lies in its simplicity – you can even get a wristwatch that'll play it – and attempts to elaborate on the format almost invariably end in disaster.

So it's probably just as well, then, that at the heart of *Super Tetris 2 + Bombliss* (*ST2+B*) there's a good, solid version of the original *Tetris* game. (You'd be surprised how many *Tetris* games don't even get that bit right.) That means that, even if the rest of it didn't work out at all, you'd still be able to console yourself with the best puzzle game ever. And *Tetris* really is unbelievably addictive – it's a game you'll never, ever, get bored of. And even if you did (which you wouldn't), *ST2+B* throws in lots of interesting-looking backgrounds and stereo sound effects to keep your spirits up.

But – hurrah! – the other bits are really good too. Two-player *Tetris* is about as good a two-player game as you'll ever get. And the other variations on the game are great as well.

And then there's *Bombliss*. It's more complicated than *Tetris*, and won't appeal to quite so wide an audience. But if you do start to crave something a little more mentally taxing, *Bombliss* is your game. The puzzle version of it is especially good, although unless you've got a brain the size of Hampshire you'll find yourself relying rather more on trial and error than skill.

It's a smart game, then. But here's some food for thought: for another £20 you could buy yourself a Game Boy, which comes complete with the best version of *Tetris* ever.

● Jonathan Davies

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
58%	63%	84%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	
90%		83%

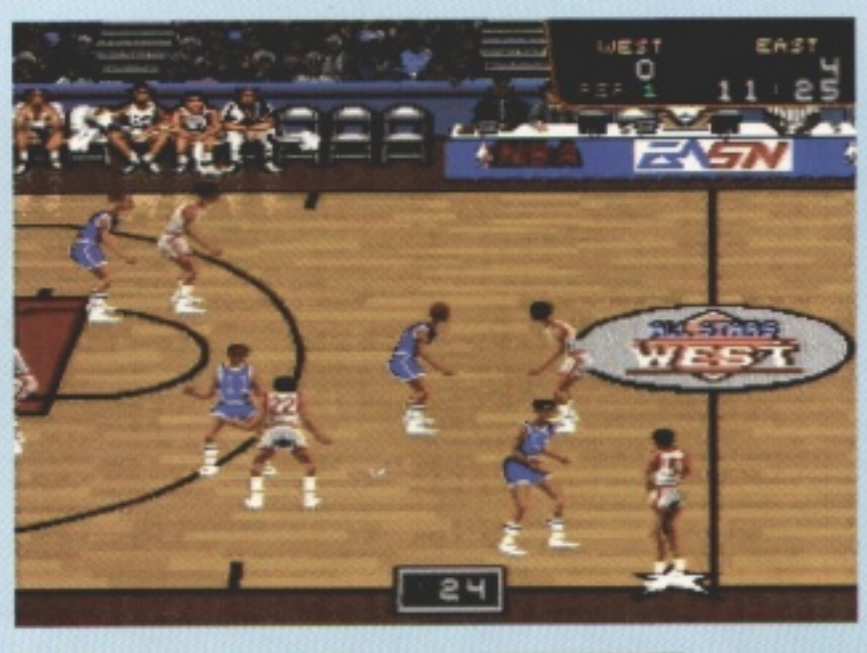
VERDICT: Playing *Tetris* on a Super Nintendo is a bit like driving to Sainsbury's in a Lamborghini. But *Tetris* is *Tetris*, and this version is just as addictive as any other.

BULLS vs BLAZERS

Heard of a game called *Bulls vs Lakers* by Electronic Arts on the Mega Drive? Well this is essentially the same thing, just updated to feature the '92 NBA playoff champions. Could EA have finally beaten their Mega Drive conversion jinx?

US Release

Game: Bulls vs Blazers & The NBA Playoffs
Publisher: Electronic Arts Sports
Developer: In-house
Price: £50 - £60
Release: Out now
Players: 1 or 2 simultaneously
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit



You want stats, you get stats! (above). To the left we can see a typical piece of in-game action – a throw-in. You control the guy with the white star under his feet. As you can see, the centre badge changes with the teams.

Every so often the action gets broken up by the ref butting in – here one of the blue guys has charged one of the green ones, so now the green guys will get a throw in. Basketball rules? We know 'em all!

At last! We're taking a shot on goal! (Individual players have their own special moves.) You get a neat replay to check out the action again too.

EA SPORTS NETWORK

You get to pick the real-life team you want...

You get to look at the mugs of the chaps on your selected team, and at their stats too...

...and you get to watch some blokes introducing everything, just like on every EA Sports game.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

To non-fans, all basketball games (with the exception of the now-officially-released *Super Basketball*, with its weird 3D viewpoint), look pretty much the same. Certainly, in presentation and general gameplay this is almost the spitting image of Tecmo's *Super NBA Basketball*, reviewed last issue. However, look beneath the surface, and you'll see it's actually a very different game.

For a start EA seem to have taken their official NBA license even more seriously than Tecmo, with all sorts of player and team stats on offer. Where this seriousness seems to have paid off is with the difficulty level – in this one you're far more likely to miss a basket than in *Super NBA Basketball*. This makes it tougher, and thus more competitive. The other advantage is the special moves for many of the players – each one reflecting the specialities of the real life guys.

Indeed, in this obsession with accuracy – as well as in the fake TV sports station-type presentation – this is very much a typical EASN (or EA Sports, as they now like to be called) presentation. Unfortunately, it's also a typical EA Sports game in the fact that it's a bit jerky in animation, a bit rough looking, and inferior to its Mega Drive version.

Don't let this put you off too much, though – it's still very playable, and packed with neat touches. Real basketball fans will probably prefer this to *Super NBA*, but when all's said and done they both play a fine game of basketball. That this will be easier to get hold of probably tips the balance slightly in EA's favour, but it's close.

● Matt Bielby

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
75%	74%	87%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	83%
85%		

VERDICT: Another good basketball game – this one's not the slickest, but it's perhaps the most challenging and realistic game.

SUPER VOLLEY II

Japanese Release

Game: Super Volley II
Publisher: Video System
Developer: In-house
Price: £50-£60
Release: Out now
Players: 1 or 2 simultaneously
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit

Super Volley II is a sequel to the _Super Volleyball_ coin-op of a few years back – the original later appeared on both PC Engine and Mega Drive, where it gained cult status. Is this new version good enough to do the same?

Above: The net player slams the ball quickly over, instead of 'setting' it for another player.

The most bizarre aspect of _Super Volley II_ is the side-on viewpoint. Compare it to last month's rival, _Volleyball Twin_ from Tonkin House. That incorporated a 3D scrolling pitch, subtly manipulated in Mode 7 – a flash way of doing it, which presented the action from a side-on, overhead angle. However, while this looks good, slowish scrolling and the occasionally weird perspective muck up playability a bit. _Super Volley II_ substitutes a flat side-on view – odd when you first see it, but much more useable in practice. It scrolls wonderfully too.

In Hyper Mode the players possess some deadly moves. Across the page you'll find the effect they can have.

Above: Does this remind you of anything? _Speedball_, perhaps?

Above: 'Looks like that illusion spike got the better of him.'

Left: 'Ohhh! An impressive back-flip saves the ball.'

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

I remember playing _Super Volleyball_ on the PC Engine. At first, it seemed like there wasn't all that much to the game, but once I'd worked out all the special moves, it really began to shine. The problem is, it was such a long time back when I played it, I can't remember all the special move button presses to see if they work on this new SNES version too. A real pain, that, as there's so much Japanese text here, it'll take a real trial and error approach to work out what's going on. Don't be too put off, as it's not unfathomable, but it'll take time to work it out.

One thing that's clear straight away, though, is that _Super Volley II_ gives us two games in one. There's straight volleyball, and then there's the futuristic (and ultra-violent) 'Hyper' mode, where the players dress like the guys in _Speedball_. Hilariously, the players don't just throw the ball, they fire it at crazy speeds, often leaving their 'target' for dead on the floor. It's really funny, but (as is the case with normal mode) loses out a bit because I couldn't work out all the special moves, so half the gameplay was lost. (You may be wondering by now what I mean by 'special moves': well, the game offers five different ways of serving, though I could only do two, plus options to make the ball invisible, split it into three etc in the 'Hyper' mode.)

This difficulty with the controls aside, though, how does the game look? Well, graphically it's very similar to the PC Engine version. The colours have been tidied up, and the parallax is more effective, but there haven't been any major changes. The original Engine animation was fab, and it's great here too – the way players interact, and stretch for the ball is brill (though the odd crouching stance they all seem to prefer looks a little dubious). The only downside is that the ball movement seems slow, but this doesn't make too much difference to gameplay.

With two players this is compulsive, but (at the risk of overstressing the point) only comes into its own once all the special moves have been mastered. The more intelligible US version, still to come (to be called _Hyper V-Ball_) will be the better bet for most of you – this promises adjustable ball speed, and a few other things I couldn't find in here. Whatever version you go for, this plays the best game of volleyball I've ever seen.

● Jason Brookes

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
82%	74%	78%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	
80%		79%

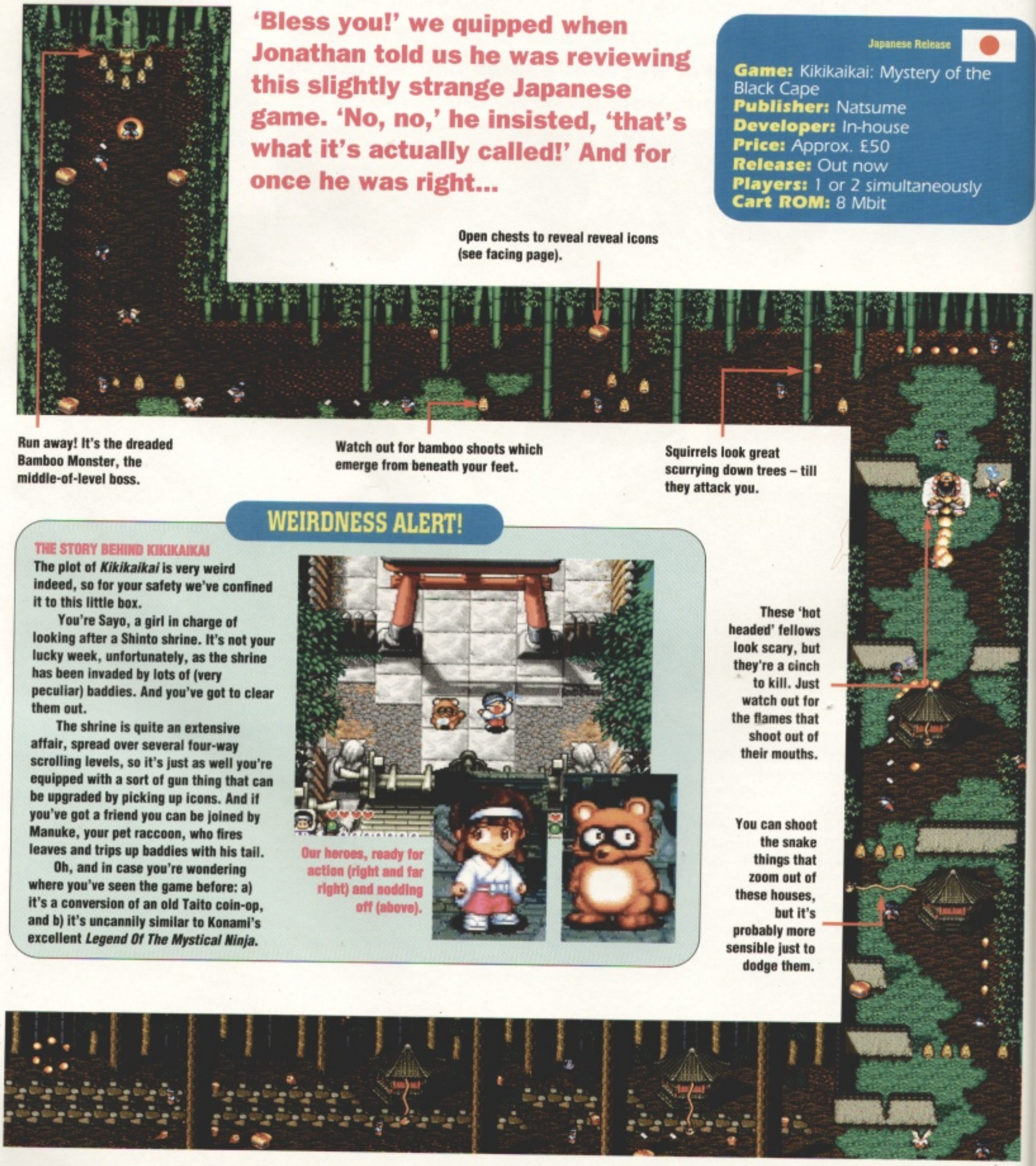
VERDICT: Despite odd perspective, a fab two-player game – but one that suffers from extensive Japanese text. For this reason, much of the gameplay is hidden.

KIKIKAIKAI

'Bless you!' we quipped when Jonathan told us he was reviewing this slightly strange Japanese game. 'No, no,' he insisted, 'that's what it's actually called!' And for once he was right...

Japanese Release

Game: Kikikaikai: Mystery of the Black Cape
Publisher: Natsume
Developer: In-house
Price: Approx. £50
Release: Out now
Players: 1 or 2 simultaneously
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit



Open chests to reveal reveal icons (see facing page).

Run away! It's the dreaded Bamboo Monster, the middle-of-level boss.

Watch out for bamboo shoots which emerge from beneath your feet.

Squirrels look great scurrying down trees – till they attack you.

These 'hot headed' fellows look scary, but they're a cinch to kill. Just watch out for the flames that shoot out of their mouths.

You can shoot the snake things that zoom out of these houses, but it's probably more sensible just to dodge them.

WEIRDNESS ALERT!

THE STORY BEHIND KIKIKAIKAI

The plot of *Kikikaikai* is very weird indeed, so for your safety we've confined it to this little box.

You're Sayo, a girl in charge of looking after a Shinto shrine. It's not your lucky week, unfortunately, as the shrine has been invaded by lots of (very peculiar) baddies. And you've got to clear them out.

The shrine is quite an extensive affair, spread over several four-way scrolling levels, so it's just as well you're equipped with a sort of gun thing that can be upgraded by picking up icons. And if you've got a friend you can be joined by Manuke, your pet raccoon, who fires leaves and trips up baddies with his tail.

Oh, and in case you're wondering where you've seen the game before: a) it's a conversion of an old Taito coin-op, and b) it's uncannily similar to Konami's excellent *Legend Of The Mystical Ninja*.

Our heroes, ready for action (right and far right) and nodding off (above).

ICON SEE!

You'll find icons lying around all over the place. Mainly they'll be hidden inside chests, though occasionally a benevolent sprite will circle around you dropping them.

You've got two sorts of weapon. This powers up your 'card' weapon, which fires what look like playing cards...

...and this powers up a fireball weapon, which doesn't have the same 'spread' but is more powerful.

This gives you a shield, which will absorb a certain number of hits.

These are rare, but provide a dead useful smart bomb.

This gives you some extra points, or energy, or maybe both.

Also, watch out for the odd 'horse' icon, which gives you a horse to ride.

A bridge! And it's guarded by hundreds of baddies! Luckily our heroine's sorted herself out with a shield.

This bit's genuinely scary. You're on a raft, which keeps getting boarded by baddies who try to push you off.

The end of level two is guarded by a giant pink octopus, who squirts water and attacks you with his tentacles.

Level three kicks off in this graveyard, with pumpkins, bats, corpses and lots of mist.

WHY IT'S WEIRD

Here are five (of the many) reasons why *Kikikaikai* is weird:

All this business about a pet raccoon.

The terrifying Bamboo Monster halfway through level two, who sends bamboo shoots and showers of armour-piercing leaves after you.

The intro sequence, and the pictures between levels. What on *earth* is going on?

The houses from which snakes shoot out with Kabuki (geisha girl-style) heads.

This is what you use to choose between 'start' and 'options' at the beginning of the game. What *is* it?

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

As regular readers of our 'Only in Japan...' column will already have gathered, the Japanese are a bit, well, weird. And that's something that tends to be reflected in the games they produce. Not all the time, of course. Games like *Street Fighter II* and *Human Grand Prix* aren't at all weird. Ones like *Axelay* and *Super Mario World* are a *bit* weird, although you don't notice it unless you look quite hard. But an awful lot of games – mostly ones that never make it to this country – are very weird indeed. *Kikikaikai* is one of them. But enough about that.

The really nice thing about *Kikikaikai* is the way you can pick it up and play it right from the word go, even though all the instructions are in Japanese and all the buttons do something different. It all just feels 'right', somehow. It also helps that, rather than the involved, incomprehensible RPG you might have been expecting, *Kikikaikai* is basically just a simple shoot-'em-up. You just run around shooting things, and that's about it.

Well, okay, that's not it. There are loads of different things to shoot. They range from cute woodland creatures to giant octopusses, with all sorts of very weird and indisputably wonderful things in between, and they're all brightly coloured and brilliantly animated. In fact, the graphics in general are excellent. They don't do anything clever with parallax or Mode 7 (er, not that we've come across, anyway), but they look smashing and they're definitely Super Nintendo. The music, too, is good – all nice and oriental, in keeping with the rest of the game.

Having said all that, wouldn't it be terrible if *Kikikaikai* was really boring to play? It would be absolutely awful. A catastrophe. But, luckily, it's not. It's marvellous fun, especially with two players. It's paced just right, isn't too easy or too hard, and has plenty of 'ooh, I wonder what's coming next' appeal. I can't think of a word to say against it. (Except, perhaps, that battery back-up or passwords might have been nice.) So a big 'phew' there. The only problem is going to be plucking up the courage to ask for it by name from your grey importer. Nobody but the Japanese could have come up with *Kikikaikai*.

● Jonathan Davies

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
86%	84%	81%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	
80%		82%

VERDICT: Slick, lovable, very weird and enormously enjoyable. You'll never look at a raccoon in quite the same way again.

Thanks to Console Concepts, (0782) 712759, for lending us the cart.

DESERT STRIKE

SUPER PLAYER'S GUIDE

ELECTRONIC ARTS (US/UK)

By Jonathan Davies

Considering its origins, *Desert Strike* is an absolute corker of a game. It's set in the Middle East, in the middle of a conflict that has absolutely nothing to do with the Gulf War (honest), and places you at the controls of a heavily-armed helicopter gunship, with all sorts of missions to go on and all sorts of things to blow up. We liked it so much that not only did we award it 90% in the last issue of *Super Play*, we've decided to do a Super Player's Guide on it too. And here it is.

The way we've done it is like this. First of all there's a few general tips that apply to the whole game. Lots of them are pretty obvious, but you're bound to find something in there that you didn't already know. (We hope so, anyway.) Then there're a blow by blow account of each of the four campaigns, describing the best way to succeed in each one. And – yes – we've given you all the passwords too.

Er... this picture's to show you what *not* to do when playing *Desert Strike*.

General tips

- A joypad with autofire gives you a massive advantage. In fact, it's almost worth buying one purely for playing *Desert Strike* on. Keep your cannon on autofire all the time, and switch autofire on for Hydras and Hellfires in real emergencies (when you're attacking a Crotale on the fourth campaign, for example), but *only* in emergencies.
- The most hazardous part of the game tends to be when you're attacking targets on the ground that are firing back at you. A good technique to minimise damage is to approach the target from behind, so that it has to turn to face you before it can fire. (Obvious, perhaps.) But then, as you attack it, use 'jinking' to dodge the missiles it launches at you (by holding down the R button and moving left and right). That way you can keep your sights locked on without actually getting hit.
- It's only worth using Hydras and Hellfires when you're under fire or desperately low on fuel. For undefended buildings and things, save them and let your cannon take the strain.
- Do missions in the order you're told to. This particularly applies to radar stations, which should be blown up as quickly as possible so that the enemy isn't alerted to your movements.
- There's a speed winch hidden on each level. Try to find it as soon as possible, as it's a godsend when you're low on armour, you're under fire and you're trying to pick up a repair kit as quickly as possible.
- For some reason, you don't use fuel when you're flying over the sea. So if you're flying from one end of the map to the other, go via the sea. (You know it makes sense.)
- It's worth carrying round a bunch of MIAs whenever you can. Then, if you're running low on armour, you can just fly to the nearest landing zone, drop them all off and get 100 armour points for each one.

Each POW returned to base gains you 100 armour points – and a big 'thank you'.

It makes a Ford Escort XR3i look a little impotent, doesn't it?

Fly over the sea and you won't use any fuel. Water good tip that is.

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/UK)

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Campaign 1: Air superiority

● Dave Arrick is probably your best bet as far as co-pilots are concerned.

MISSION 1: RADAR SITES

Use Hydras to take out the defending artillery, making sure you don't hang around in one place for long enough for them to lock onto you. Then use your cannon to destroy the radar dish.

MISSION 2: POWER STATION

Approach the power station with caution, as it's heavily defended, particularly by annoying blokes with rocket launchers. Use 'hit and run' tactics to eliminate the defences, one by one, and then blow up the power station. Destroy all the pylons, too, for extra points, and don't forget to pick up the armour repair box.

MISSION 3: AIRFIELDS

Again, tackle the defences first. Then blow up the buildings, watching out for baddies lurking in the wreckage, and finally shoot all the planes.

MISSION 4: COMMAND CENTRES

These are pretty tricky, being surrounded by the latest in enemy defence equipment, so make sure you're fully armed and armoured beforehand.

Zap the guard towers with Hydras first (there are four of them), blowing up the command centre last, and watching out for the guns which swivel around faster than might ordinarily be considered fair. Then pick up the commander from the second command centre and rescue the spy. This bit's easy as long as you watch out for the enemy vehicles which move in while you're in the middle of doing it. Finally, return to your ship for the victory celebrations.

● Up at the top of the map there's a group of MIAs who're completely surrounded by baddies. Rescue them for an armour top-up.

● Don't forget to pick up the pilot of the crashed F-15. Blow up the remains of his plane for extra points.

● Blow up rocks and you might find extra lives, ammunition and other goodies hidden inside.

Campaign 2: Scud buster

PASSWORD: 8ZL3H23

MISSION 1: RADAR SITES

Same as before, only they're a bit more heavily defended.

MISSION 2: JAIL BREAK

Before you start attacking buildings, make sure you clear the whole area of artillery. (Search around for mobile baddies, as it's embarrassing when they turn up in the middle of the rescue operation.) Then blow a hole in the wall of the prison and winch up the hostages. If you see any buildings with flashes of light in the windows, that's because POWs are signalling to you with mirrors.

MISSION 3: POWER STATION

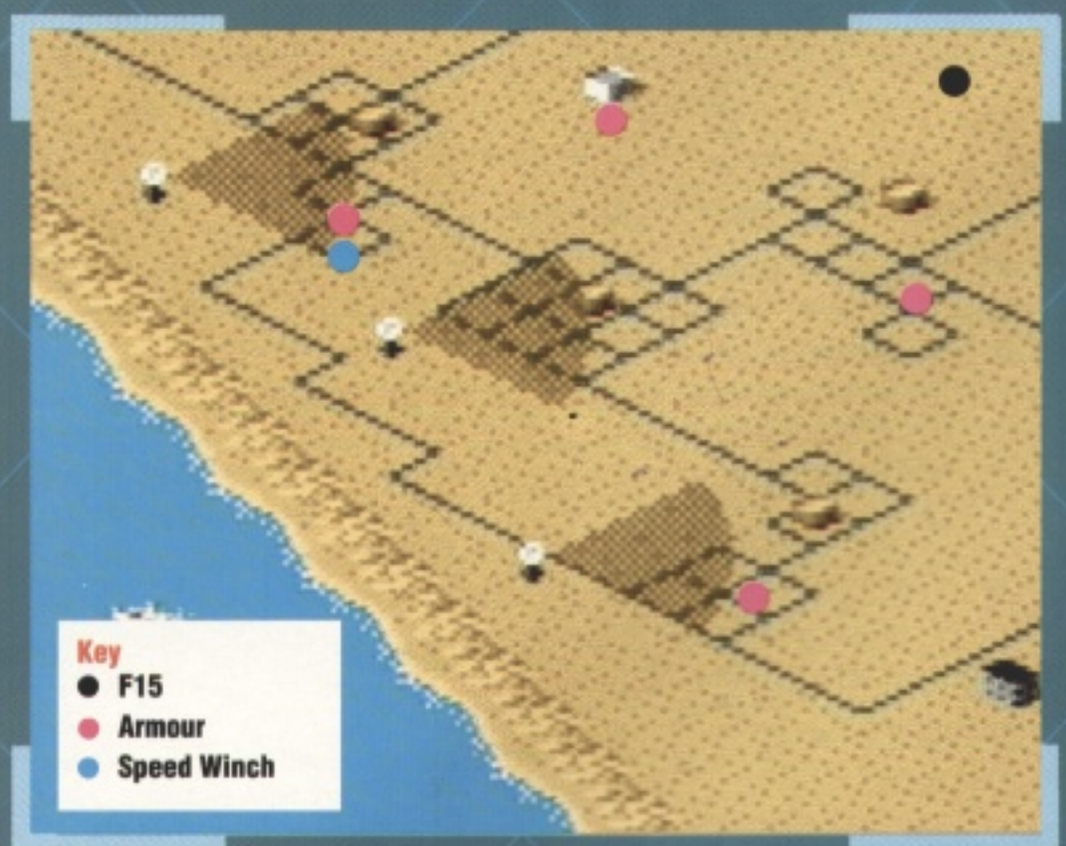
Just the same as the last one, really, only a bit more heavily defended. Don't forget to blow up the pylons.

MISSION 4: CHEMICAL WEAPONS FACTORY

Use the same approach as the Jail Break, wiping out any resistance first and being sure to clear the surrounding area of armed vehicles that might later give you problems. Then blow up the building and the ball things.

MISSION 5: SCUD LAUNCHERS

Each SCUD commander shows you the location of one launcher (as long as you don't accidentally kill him when you blow up his building – easily done). For maximum points you've got to try to destroy the launcher before it launches its SCUD (which it won't start doing till you've found it). It's worth bearing in mind that if a launcher is guarded by a gun, the gun is usually positioned between the SCUD commander and the launcher, so if you fly straight from one to the other you'll run right into it. Take a circuitous detour round the back of the launcher and you'll be in with a better chance of getting the missile before it launches.



MISSION 6: RESCUE POWS

Take out the guard towers first, and as you rescue the prisoners watch out for ZSUs moving in. You'll need to take the prisoners to safety in two loads, as your helicopter's only small.

● There's another pilot (Jake) at the top right of the map who you can rescue, and who'll come in handy on Campaign 3 – you can select him as your co-pilot. If you blow up the remains of his plane, as well as clocking up some more points you'll find an extra life underneath.

Campaign 3: Embassy City

PASSWORD: 93LLBR5

MISSION 1: RESCUE UN INSPECTORS

Incredibly easy – just go in there and rescue them.

MISSION 2: DESTROY BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS PLANT

There's nothing too challenging here, either. Just shoot at the buildings till the scientists emerge and then pick them up.

MISSION 3: DESTROY UNDERGROUND MISSILE SILOS

Being underground, the silos are very hard to spot. Once you've destroyed the hardware that defends them, fire your cannon at the ground, relying on your co-pilot to find the sites (you can tell when he has because the impact marks will go grey). Once you've uncovered the site, unleash a barrage of missiles before the rocket can be launched. With inland silos, it's worth shooting the surrounding sand dunes in case they're hiding any supplies.

MISSION 4: RESCUE PILOTS LOST AT SEA

Take out the speed boats (again, an accurate co-pilot is useful if you don't want to hit the good guy by mistake) and then pick up the pilot.

MISSION 5: DESTROY POWER STATION

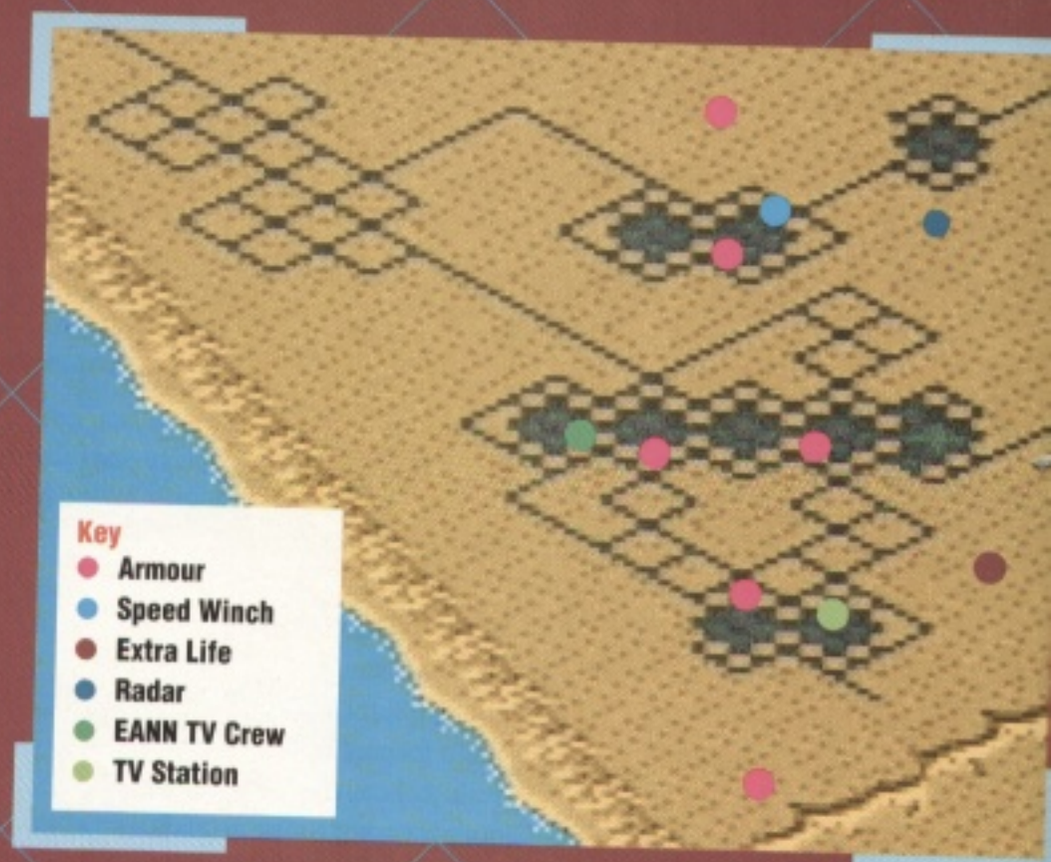
Much the same as any other power station you've ever destroyed. There's a repair kit lurking underneath it.

MISSION 6: RESCUE PRISONERS ON MADMAN'S YACHT

When you first approach the yacht you'll find it's defended by a helicopter and a boat. Destroy those, along with the men atop the yacht, and then fire at the hull until a hole appears. POWs then jump out, and you've got to pick them up before they drown. Trouble is there are lots of POWs, so you'll have to make a couple of trips back to the shore, and baddies appear periodically on the deck and in boats. If more than five prisoners drown you've failed the mission.

MISSION 7: CAPTURE ENEMY AMBASSADOR

Now this is difficult. It helps to destroy the radar site to the south first. You'll then have to circle round picking off the defences, before going for the ambassador. Keep an eye out for extra kit inside buildings, but mind the tank that's inside one of them. A useful tactic is to place buildings between you and the ZSUs, so when they fire at you they hit the buildings.



MISSION 8: EMBASSY RESCUE

Destroy all the defences, including three helicopters, and then land on the cross so your co-pilot can head into the building. Blow up the gates to the compound, but don't hit the bus. The bus will then move off, and you'll have to protect it from enemy attack. The bus only moves when it's on-screen, incidentally. Pick up your co-pilot again when the bus reaches its destination.

- Don't forget the EANN crew.
- Lots of buildings and sand dunes contain goodies. We've marked all the armour repair kits on the map, but there's fuel and ammo there too.

Campaign 4: Nuclear storm

PASSWORD: 9R894JH

MISSION 1: PROTECT THE OIL FIELDS

You've to to destroy the baddies who're converging on the oil field pretty sharpish, before they do too much damage. Then fly up the beach a bit and pick up the commandos, dropping them off at the white cross in the middle of the oilfields.

MISSION 2: STOP THE OIL SPILLS

To do this you need to shoot the three pipes that are pouring oil into the sea at just the right spot. Not too difficult, although they are quite heavily defended.

MISSION 3: DESTROY BUNKERS

Watch out for the tanks that're buried in the sand. Shoot the sand with your cannon to reveal the tanks, and then hit them with missiles. Then use your cannon on the bunker to set the hostages free.

MISSION 4: BOMB PARTS

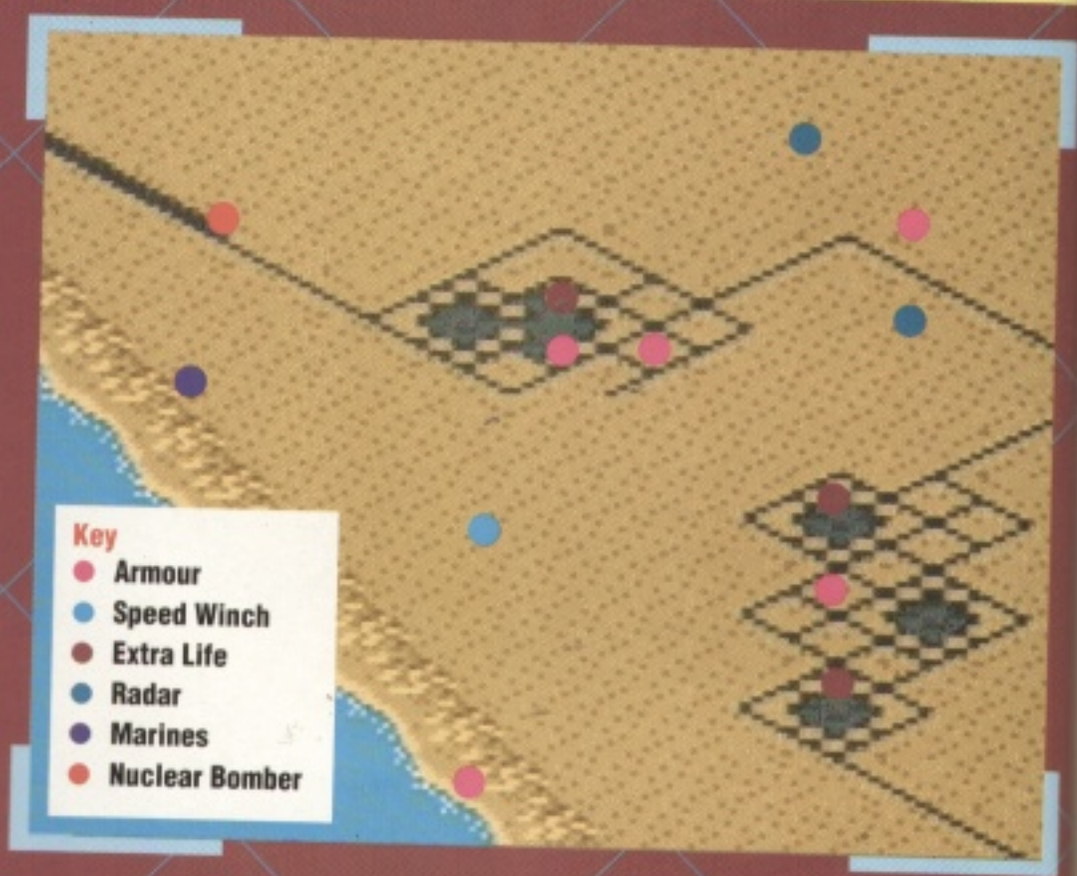
The bomb parts are hidden in dust lorries that are driving round the cities in the east of the map. But some lorries are decoys carrying hostages – don't destroy too many of those or you'll fail the mission. What you've got to do is follow the lorries round until you can see what's in them.

MISSION 5: DESTROY NUCLEAR BOMB FACTORY

There are two radar stations to the south and west of the factory which you should blow up first. Even then, destroying the factory is really hard as the Crotales are such gits to kill. If you're clever, though, you can position yourself so that the Crotales hit the factory rather than you. And if you've got an autofire joypad, switch Hellfires to auto (just this once, though).

MISSION 6: POWER STATION

Unbelievable but true – you can use the same technique on this. Destroy two of the Crotales, and then hover so that the other two blow up the power station on your behalf.



MISSION 7: DESTROY PALACE

This is the most difficult thing ever, in the world. It's stupidly difficult. (And made all the more difficult by *Desert Strike*'s irritating way of shooting at you with baddies you can't actually see because they're off the edge of the screen. Grr.) All you can do is make sure you collect all the goodies that are hidden in buildings (the speed winch helps here – it's in the oilfields), use buildings for shelter and, er, play as well as you can.

MISSION 8: NUCLEAR BOMBER

Your co-pilot, who was captured in the last mission, enters the bomber with the madman. Shoot a hole in the side of the bomber and your co-pilot will walk out across the wing. Pick him up when he gets to the edge. You've now got to blow up the bomber, which will take absolutely ages. Keep re-arming with the crates of ammo that are scattered liberally about the place, and watch out for enemy vehicles who'll stream in from all over the place.

Thanks to Ian Lyden for his help in putting this guide together. He'll be getting a *Super Play* T-shirt.

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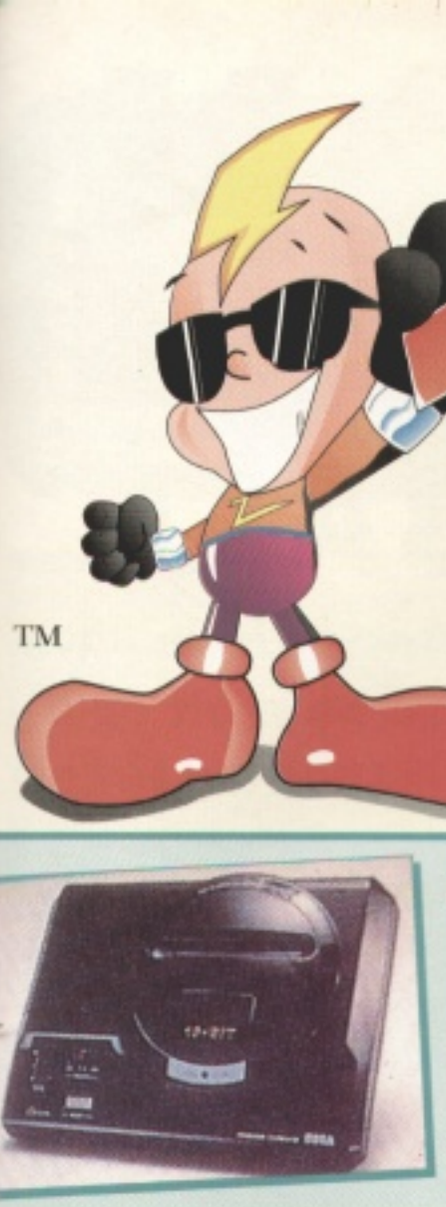

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JAKI CRUSH:

NAXAT SUPER PINBALL

Being a bunch of pinball junkies – and fans of Naxat's earlier *Devil Crash* – we were expecting a lot of *Jaki Crush*. Unhappily, it's turned out to be a bit of a disappointment (but at least that means we can get the mag finished on time!)

The gothic theme of *Jaki Crush* is almost exactly the same as that of its prequel, *Devil Crash*, but somehow the graphics aren't quite as sharp. Still, there are enough demonic influences in here to seriously worry the vicar when he pops round for tea...

No, I haven't got a clue why the ball changes colour from orange to purple at certain points in the game either, but a safe bet would be for extra points. (I wish it moved a bit faster, that's all!)

Enter the fiery dragon's mouth and this bonus table will appear. Those statues must be hit in a set order to bring them to life. (There's a demonic 'metal' soundtrack on this bit, by the way.)

It's the return of the swirly background! Things immediately rise in temperature if you enter this dragon's mouth. Two demons must be disposed of and the only weapon you've got is your ball.

At last, a video pinball game that has a multi ball feature! (In case you were wondering, by the way, the scrolling follows the ball nearest the main flippers.)

Bonus tables are nearly always accessed by entering the mouths of nasties like this one. First off, though, you've got to get them to open up.

Cor, scary or what? Evil faces turn even nastier if you hit them enough.

Japanese Release

Game: Jaki Crush: Super Pinball
Publisher: Naxat
Developer: In-house
Price: Approx. £50
Release: Out now
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit

The game features plenty of beautiful graphics, with many of them fairly scary too...

These bonus tables are basically *Space Invaders*, by the way. As you play, the face gets nastier...

...and nastier. In fact, it's getting a bit too 'orrible for my liking. I hope I lose my ball pretty soon...

Well, that didn't tale too long, did it? This is, surprise, surprise, the score screen, complete with – yes – even more demons!

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

What's happened? It's all gone slightly wrong. How could the producers of the best console pinball game ever (*Devil Crash* on the PC Engine and Mega Drive) release a sequel with such inferior look and feel? My best guess is that new programmers were given the job, and simply didn't know how to get the best out of the Super Nintendo, but that's really no excuse – it's a drop in standards, and I'm disappointed. After all, I was looking forward to wasting lots of office hours on this. (*Doubt! – Ed.*)

So what're the problems then? Here's a brief run-down with comparisons:
a) The ball movement is sluggish and a lot slower than in *Devil Crash*. It's also unrealistic at times.
b) The scrolling table is awkwardly designed, so the ball often has real trouble reaching the higher parts of the table.
c) The graphics aren't as well-designed or drawn as in *Devil Crash* – a desperate state of affairs, considering it's running on a far superior system.
d) The sound effects and music are poor (*Pinball Dreams* on the Amiga knocks it for six on this score).
e) The score stays off screen until you actually lose a ball.

But wait! It's not all doom and gloom. Here are a few things in *Jaki Crush*'s favour:
a) The bonus tables are great, just as they were in *Devil Crash*.
b) There's a multi-ball feature – hurray!
c) Er, that's about it.

Having played *Devil Crash* and *Pinball Dreams* extensively, *Jaki Crush* is annoyingly flawed by comparison, but let's be fair – newcomers to the concept of video pinball will find much to enjoy here. The ball's movement will seem slow and leaden to *Devil Crash* fans, but it's acceptable if you don't know any better (unless you're playing it on a UK machine, where the game really *is* terribly slow and can't be recommended). What's really daft is the fact that there's an option to slow down the ball speed, not speed it up!

Graphically it's a mixed bag too. The bonus tables are fun and impressive, but, in contrast, the main table is for some reason fairly drab. Sound lets the side down a bit too, with weedy music and crackly sound effects. Video pinball *needs* great sound, so it's a real shame that nothing gets close to *Pinball Dreams* in this department. This all said, however, the fact remains that *Jaki Crush* is the only pinball game available for the Super NES, and will provide lots of fun for many. The problem is, the Super Nintendo should have the best pinball game of them all, and this certainly isn't that.

● Jason Brookes

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
84%	68%	70%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	73%
76%		

VERDICT: Reasonable fun, and quite attractive in places, but far too slow to get the adrenalin flowing. If you've got a UK machine with an adaptor, especially, give it a miss – it's even slower. (Perhaps they'll speed it up if it gets a UK release.)

VIDEO PINBALL: SO WHAT'S THE COMPETITION?

There isn't any competition. Well, not on the Super Nintendo anyway – though there *are* three games available on other formats that demolish *Jaki Crush* in the playability stakes.

What are they? Well, the most well known console pinball game is *Devil Crash*, released on PC Engine by Naxat, the people behind *Jaki Crush*. This was Naxat's second stab at a pinball game – their first, *Alien Crush*, was also a hit. *Devil Crash* (with its beautiful graphics and perfect ball movement) was later translated onto the Mega Drive by Technosoft (it's called *Dragon's Fury* in the UK and US – see pic top right), but suffered in the process, despite the addition of a few new bonus tables. The gothic feel of *Devil Crash* is emulated by *Jaki Crush* but in graphics, sound and playability, this new release is the lesser game.

The other great pinball games are *Pinball Dreams* and its sequel, *Pinball Fantasies*, on the Amiga (see pic bottom right), games so slick and compulsive that they should carry government warnings. These are more conventional pinball simulators than *Devil Crash* et al, but the ball movement, graphics, sound effects and music are fab. The producers of both games, 21st Century, are converting *Pinball Dreams* to the Game Boy, so let's hope a SNES version isn't too far away.

ON THE 'TAP'!

Japanese

Name: Super Multitap
Description: Super Nintendo five-player adaptor
Manufacturer: Hudson Soft
Price: Approx. £35
Availability: Out now (through import suppliers only)

If there's one console accessory you simply *must* have, it's a multi-player adaptor. Just ask the Japanese – over there, multi-player games are incredibly popular, and the PC Engine, in particular, has earned itself a strong reputation in the field. However, it's no longer got the field to itself – with the release of Hudson Soft's new Super Multitap unit, the Super Nintendo suddenly surges forward to make a strong bid for a piece of the action. Here we check out the Super Multitap itself, plus the first four-player games you can use with it.

Let's get one thing straight – multi-player games are fab. We know, 'cos we're always playing them in the office – it's one of the big advantages of having loads of gameplayers in or around the place all day long. The problem has been that, up until now, we've only been able to play games two at a time – the best most games can offer is a simultaneous two-player mode, and even if they didn't, there's still the severe physical limitation of having only two joypad ports on the console to deal with.

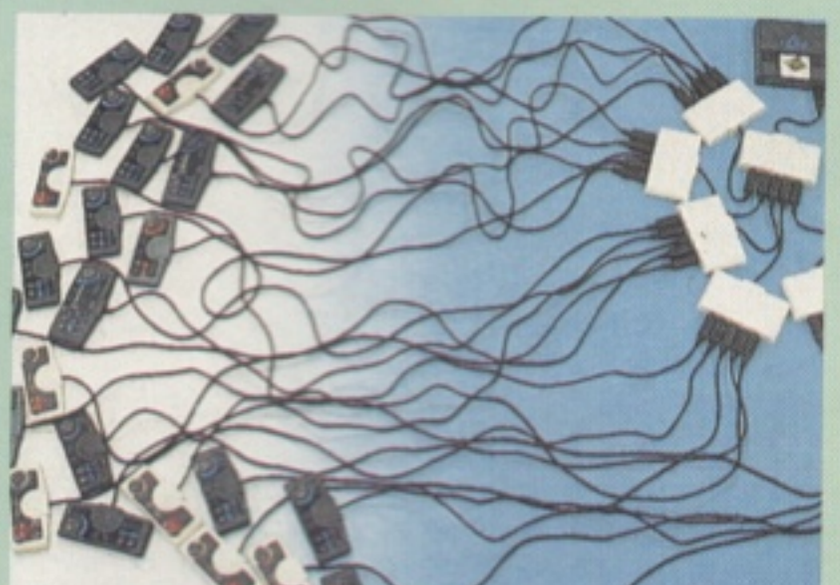
This being the case, we were very excited to hear that the normally excellent Hudson Soft were about to release a four-player adaptor for the Super Nintendo. Now if only a few people were to bring out some decent games for it, we thought, we'd be in hog heaven. The last area where another console (in this case, chiefly the PC Engine) had something over the Super Nintendo would have been well and truly done away with.

PARTY ON!

Multi-player console games: a brief history

Before we look at the details of the Super Multitap, though, a quick outline of the history of multi-player games on console. While it's true that in Japan most consoles have some kind of multi-player facility, the two most recent additions have lagged behind – the Super Nintendo has only just got one now, and the Mega Drive still hasn't (one *is* planned though). These failings have, by and large, left the coast clear for the third big Japanese console, the PC Engine, to clean up in the area.

Here's the PC Engine version of the Multitap – the set up seen here is just plain silly, but it shows what can be done.



Indeed, the PC Engine received a multitap (five-player adaptor) very early on, as well as plenty of the all-important high quality software to go with it – factors that helped to push NEC (its manufacturers) well ahead of Sega in the Japanese console market. The games that came out for it were top quality too – things like the four-player *World Court Tennis* from Namco (even better than the great *Super Tennis* on the SNES), and the (now all-formats) Hudson Soft classic *Bomberman* (*Dynablaster*), for starters. We're waiting with baited breath to see what *Bomberman* will look like on Super Nintendo, that's for sure!

Not all multi-player adaptors have been for the PC Engine, though. Indeed, there are actually a couple out there for the 8-bit Nintendo NES too. The more conventional of the pair, the 'Four Score', works like the Super Multitap, but there's also something called the 'Party Tap' for the Famicom (Japanese version) which is rather different.

How so? Well, video quiz games are very popular in Japan, but they work best not with proper joypads, but special single button ones – and lots of them. This is what the Party Tap is – an adaptor with six little single button joypads coming out of it, so that six of you can sit around the console, pressing your button when you know the answer to a particular question. Real family fun.

More recently, a company called Hori has even launched a version of the Party Tap for the Super Nintendo. It's called the Twin Tap (see pic right), and is to be used with their 'Party Room 21' multi-player adaptor, a direct rival for the Hudson Multitap, launched about two months ago. These quiz joypads plug into each port of the Party Room 21 adaptor in pairs, allowing up to eight people to play at once. (Don't get too excited, though – currently the only quiz game that uses the unit is called *The Ultimate Quiz Masters Finals* from Yonesawa, and it's all in Japanese, with no English version planned.) As the Party Room 21 uses the same standardised five-player architecture as Hudson's Multitap, the same software should be compatible across both units.

THE SUPER MULTITAP: HOW IT WORKS

The Super Multitap was launched in Japan in mid November 1992, and is now available from selected importers in this country. (An official UK release for it has yet to be announced, but import models seem to work fine with UK machines. That said, we've only tried it with two games so far, so check with importers before you buy.) It's a far larger unit than the Multitap for the PC Engine, presumably in order to cope with the wider joypad ports of the Super NES. The unit plugs into the second joypad port, while a standard controller plugs into joypad port one. Four extra controllers can then be plugged into the Multitap. Obviously, only games that have been programmed to use the Multitap will work with it – it's no use plugging in a copy of *Super Tennis* and hoping for a four-player game. There is a

MULTI-PLAYER FUN WITH HUDSON SOFT'S SUPER MULTITAP

BY JASON BROOKES

switch on the unit that selects either a two-player game, or one for anything between three and five players.

SUPER MULTI-TAP SOFTWARE

So what will you be able to play on the Super Multitap? Well, besides a conversion of a Japanese board game called *Super Momotaro Train 2*, software is naturally thin on the ground – the adaptor is very new, after all. However, tennis fans will be thrilled to learn that *Jimmy Connor's Pro Tennis Tour* from UBI Soft (already available on US import and imminent for the UK) supports the adaptor. We've a review of it, with special reference to the four player mode, just over the page. (That UBI Soft should be first with a game for the Multitap isn't perhaps as weird as it sounds – after all, UBI converted Hudson games like *Bomberman* and *PC Kid* from the PC Engine to home computers, so the link between the two companies is already there. It's likely to only have taken a couple of phone calls for *Jimmy Connors* developer Blue Byte to get the compatibility info they needed from Hudson Soft in Japan.)

Other games? Well, *Bomberman* fans will be delighted to learn that a new version of their favourite game is scheduled to appear this year on the Super Famicom, this too

The fab *Dynablaster/Bomberman* – this is *Bomberman '93* on PC Engine, the one we'll probably get on Super NES.

Here's *Super Fire Pro Wrestling 2* from Human – the four-player wrestling game that'll be the next Multitap compatible release. Look for our review next ish.

Here's Hori's Party Room 21, a recent rival for the Multitap.

Importers may start bringing this into the country soon too. They're selling like hot cakes in Japan.

From left to right, this row: another version of the multi-adaptor, only available in Japan; the boxed-up Twin Tap, complete with cute little jogpads; and here's *The Ultimate Quiz Masters Finals*, the triv-style game you play with them.

And here's a close-up. These single button jogpads attach to the Twin Tap, allowing for hilarious evenings of family quiz playing.

supporting the Multitap. It's highly likely that it will be similar to the new improved sequel that's just arrived on the PC Engine in Japan – called *Bomberman '93*, it has computer-controlled rival players joining in the fun in the battle mode version of the game. However, it's still not clear if this will be the case on Super Nintendo. The only other multi-player game importers are currently bothering with is Human's new four-player wrestling title *Super Fire Pro Wrestling 2* – we should have a review of that next issue. The tag team matches sound like they'll be a blast!

FINAL VERDICT: SO IS THE MULTITAP WORTH THE DOSH?

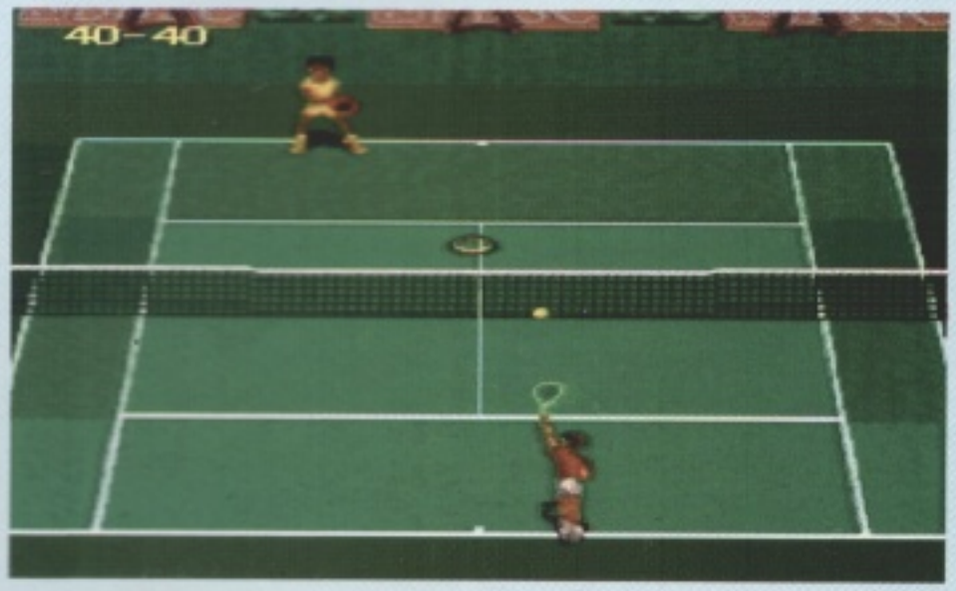
Yes, quite simply. There's no doubt in our minds that SNES owners are going to be bowled over by Super Multitap – the two games we've played so far are tremendous fun. While gimmicky devices like the Super Scope are left floundering without any decent games, the Multitap (and other similar units such as Hori's Party Room 21, of course) provides real potential for developers to experiment with multi-player scenarios – we expect to see a number of top quality games taking advantage of the four-player mode cropping up over the next six months. For people with loads of mates – or Super Nintendo playing families – it's simply a must, or will be as soon as a few more games come out. That the Multitap itself is a sturdy, well made unit, that should last forever (more or less), is really only the icing on the cake.

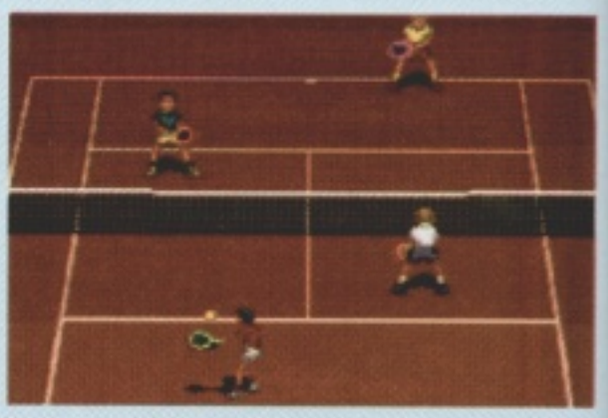
● Thanks to Game On, (081) 856 5282, for supplying us with the Super Multitap we used. It costs around £34.99. No news yet on whether anyone will import the PR 21, but it seems likely – the difficulty is importers can't get hold of them, they're so popular in Japan!

JIMMY CONNORS'

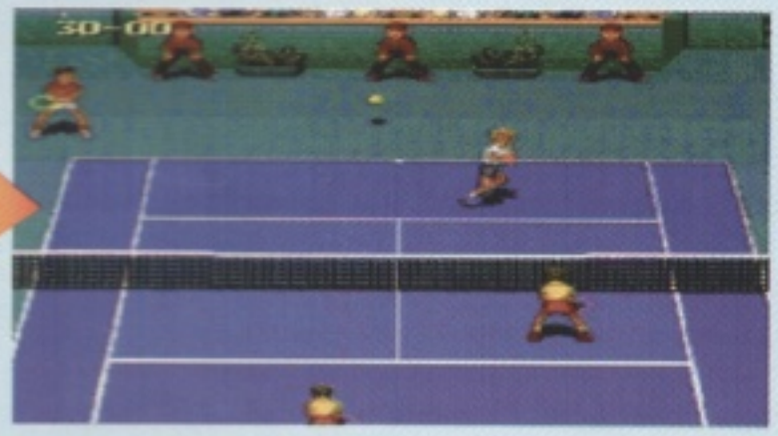
PRO TENNIS TOUR

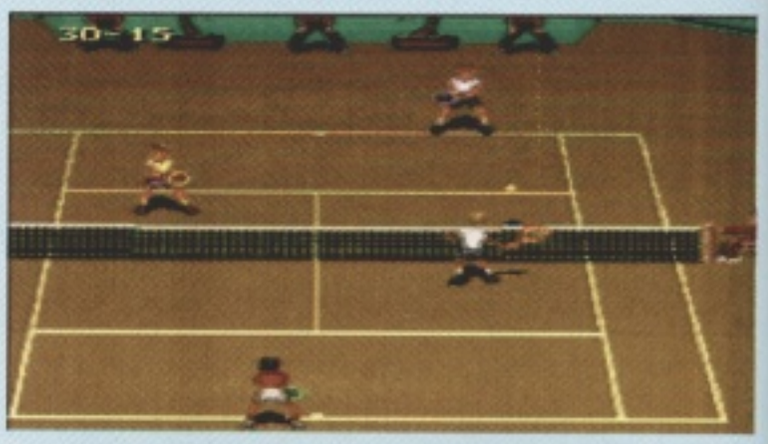
Those who've come fresh to the SNES from a home computer might not get excited by a tennis game. But with Hudson Soft's new four-player adaptor, it's a whole new ball game...

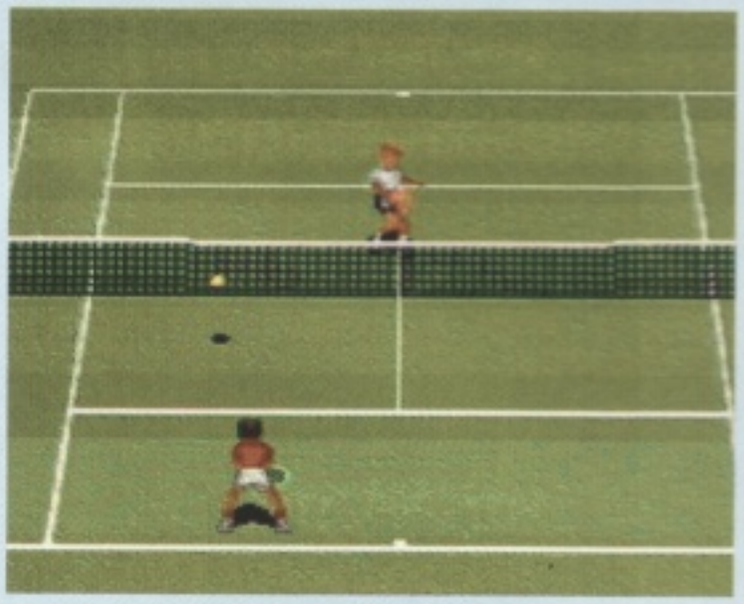


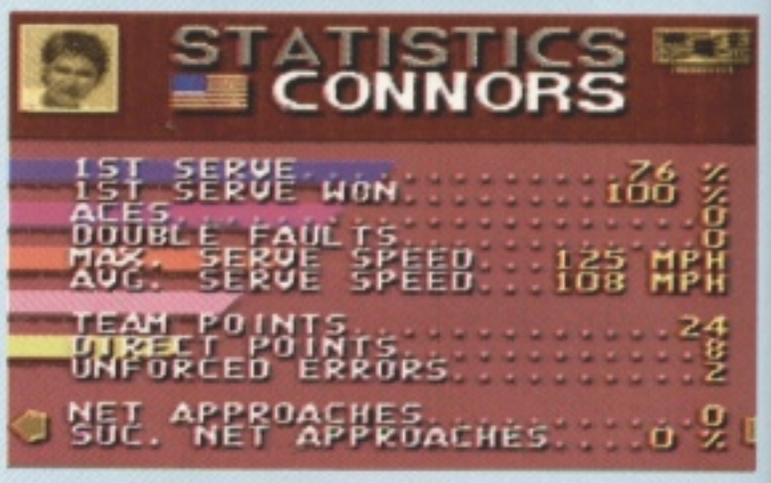


Left: When serving, guide the small oval shape into your opponents' box to position the ball. Above: Jimmy's double-handed backhand return is tested on the clay court.



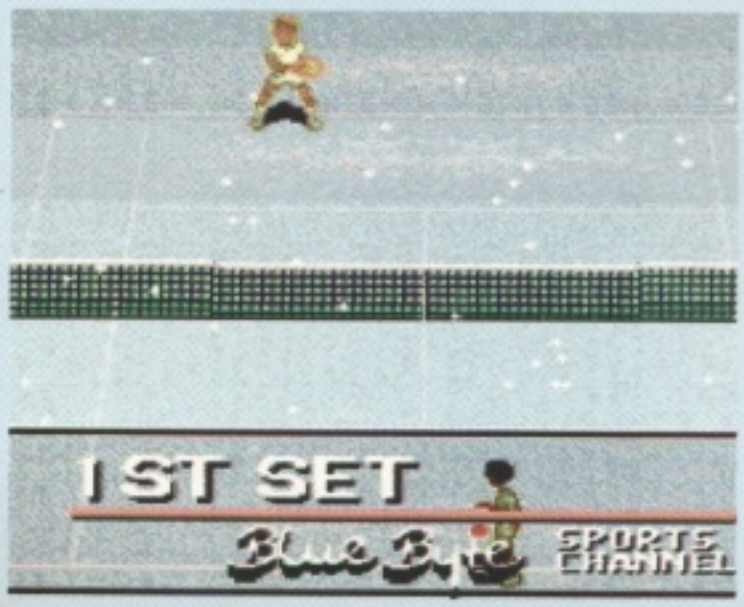






Top left and above: Hudson Soft's new multi-player adaptor. Plug it in and four joypads will become selectable on screen! Hurray! Four players on screen at once. *And* the court's changed colour halfway through. (*Eh? – Ed.*)

Left: Net play gets the better of your opponent. Below left: Playing in the Antarctic. (*Bloody ridiculous – Ed.*) Bloody ridiculous! Right: Stats fans will love this screen – loadsa stats, and all accurate too!



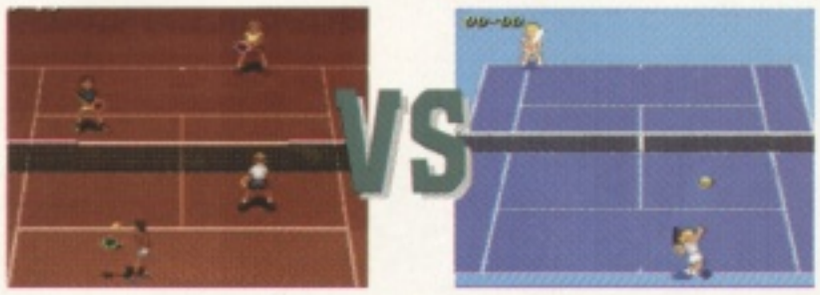
BLUE BYTE: THE MEN BEHIND THE GAME

The developers of *Jimmy Connors' Pro Tennis Tour*, Blue Byte, are a German team, best known for putting together the *Pro Tennis Tour* games on the Amiga (see pic right). They also developed a little known tennis game called *Tie Break* for the Amiga – one that set out to be the *Kick Off* of the tennis world. Certainly it had an unusual control method – one which seems to have rubbed off onto this new game. Thus, while *Jimmy Connors* approaches the sport from roughly the same angle as *Super Tennis*, it's unlike it in design enough to make it a completely different playing experience. Whether it's actually better than *Super Tennis* or not should become clear during the course of this review, but I don't think it's giving the game away too much to reveal at this point that it's without a doubt the best sport sim Blue Byte have ever done.

US UK Release

Game: Jimmy Connors' Pro Tennis Tour
Publisher: UBI Soft
Developer: Blue Byte
Price: £44.99
Release: Out now
Players: 1-4 simultaneously
Cart ROM: 4 Mbit

JIMMY VS SUPER TENNIS: THE PROS AND, ER, CONNORS



Super Tennis **(far right) is a classic. But one thing it doesn't have is a four-player option, and four players mean four times the fun. (Oh hang on – *Super Tennis* has a two-player mode, so *Jimmy Connors* is, er, only twice as much fun, isn't it?) Whatever the case, the four-player mode in *Jimmy* is more fun simply because there are so many of you participating – you get so many more different shots occurring, and there's usually someone hopeless for everyone to laugh at too. If you ever think you might have three pals around for a game of tennis, *Jimmy Connors* – plus the Multitap – has to be a good buy.**

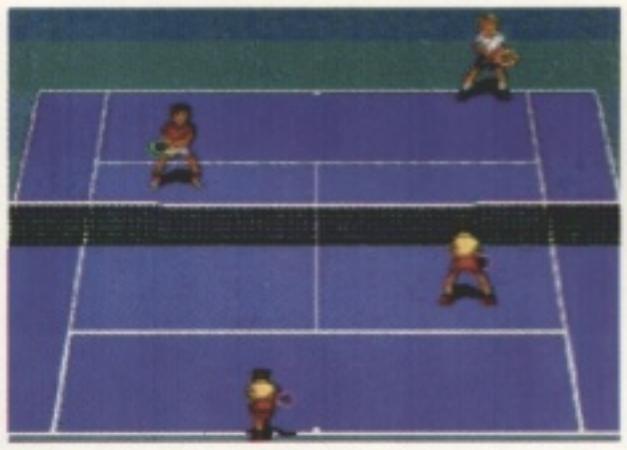
However, that said, most of us are much more likely to kill time with two-player games, and with these the more familiar *Super Tennis* would seem to have the edge over *Jimmy* most of the time. To a large extent this is because a fairly matched game relies on both players being equally conversant with the controls – something that's a lot easier to achieve with *Super Tennis*. *Jimmy Connors* becomes an excellent two-player game with time, but it takes some learning. Happily Blue Byte have included an excellent training mode that goes some way towards teaching the rank beginner exactly how to play.

So, which one to buy? Well, both are great, of course, and well worth having, but if you do have to pick, it seems likely your decision will rest on whether you really think you're going to have three pals around for a game very often or not.

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE

Top: First choose your coach.
Middle: Next, select the type of control method you prefer.
Bottom: Hit the balls your coach throws at you. Oh yeah, and listen to his advice too – it's a brilliant way of learning the controls and improving your game.

SPOT THE BALL



Cut out or photocopy this screenshot and mark a cross where you think the ball is. There's a T-shirt up for grabs for the closest. Send to: Spot The Ball, *Super Play*, 30 Monmouth St, Bath BA1 2BW.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

I'm not a great fan of sports sims usually, but I absolutely adore console tennis. Note how the word 'console' crept in there – there's a substantial difference between tennis games and their computer counterparts, chiefly that the former are much (much) more playable. *Super Tennis* on the Super Nintendo and *World Court Tennis* and *Final Match Tennis* on the PC Engine *are* works of genius, and more fun than than almost anything else I can think of. A newcomer like *Jimmy Connors* (the game, not the man) will have to go some to improve on them, that's for sure.

So, what can *Jimmy Connors* do that *Super Tennis* can't? The most obvious answer, of course, is that it supports Hudson Soft's new multi-player adaptor (available on import in this country, and reviewed on page 56). The special four-player inter-magazine contest (between *GamesMaster*, *Total!* and *Super Play*) UBI Soft staged to introduce this game to us recently was one of the most enjoyable bits of gameplaying I've had since... well, since I last played four-player tennis on the PC Engine, I guess. As with most sports games, the more people are playing, the better it gets.

A four-player mode alone couldn't be enough to save a bad game, though. The success of video tennis ultimately hangs upon the controls. Here they're dealt with imaginatively and sensibly, with a wide range of shots at every player's disposal. That said, however, I'm still not 100% happy with the control system. While the game is hugely enjoyable, and provides a real challenge, the ball movement occasionally verges on the erratic and unrealistic – it either floats around the screen like a balloon or bounces too fast like a ping pong ball . *Amazing Tennis* (reviewed in issue 3) may have lacked depth compared to this, but you can't deny the ball movement there was spot on – it's an annoying failing that you can't always say the same about *Jimmy Connors' Pro Tennis Tour.*

The only other problem with the game, however, crops up when executing strong shots. The way you do these is by holding down the button for some time. Consequently, fast, aggressive shots can often only be returned with slower and weaker shots – you simply don't have the time to hold the button down long enough for a hard return. You can't run with the button depressed, either, so it's hard to prepare for a fast running return. (Yes, yes, you could argue that it's the same in real tennis, but I tend to feel that reality should take a back seat to a bit of excitement.)

So where does that leave us? Well, with a fabulous tennis game, but one made slightly less accessible than some rivals (ie *Super Tennis*) by its 'original' controls. However, if you can live with these (and I suspect that you can – no other sports game teaches you how to cope with them quite as splendidly as this), I think you'll end up loving it to bits. My advice is take time to really get into it, get a Multitap adaptor, and invite some pals round to play. You'll be glad you did.

● Jason Brookes

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
80%	82%	88%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	88%
92%		

VERDICT: A really great tennis game that simply begs to be played – especially with four players. Plenty of options too. However, it does demand that you spend loads of time really learning those controls.

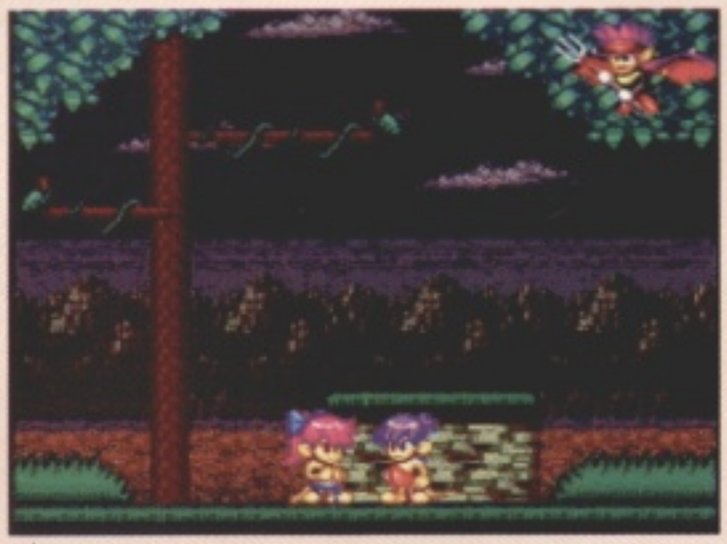
CAVEMAN NINJA 2

It's the sequel to *Joe and Mac* (sort of). It's called *Congo's Caper* in America. And It stars a blue-haired kid who turns into a monkey.

Japanese Release

Game: Caveman Ninja 2
Publisher: Data East
Developer: Act Team
Price: Approx. £50
Release: Out now
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit

A red blob. (Its importance will be made clear in the caption below.)



It's never really clear why video game characters bother with girlfriends – they *always* get kidnapped. Rookie's has been, by a baddy with purple spiky hair and wings, so, of course, he's off to gallantly rescue her.

If Rookie manages to collect three red blobs he'll turn into Super Rookie (or something), and for a limited time will be invincible. It's great for tackling end-of-level baddies.

Here's a typical slice from the life of Rookie. He's already tackled 10 pterodactyls and 24 dinosaurs, and that's *before* he's had his Shredded Wheat!

Collect a blue rectangle and you'll be able to try your luck on the fruit machine thing seen in the (normally empty) boxes at the top of the screen. The prizes include an extra life and three extra lives. And the jackpot? Five extra lives!

Collect 100 of these yellow diamonds and you'll be rewarded with a shiny new life.

LOOK WHAT I CAN DO!

This is Rookie. If you think his blue hair's weird, wait till you see his tail.

He can jump.

He can jump a bit higher.

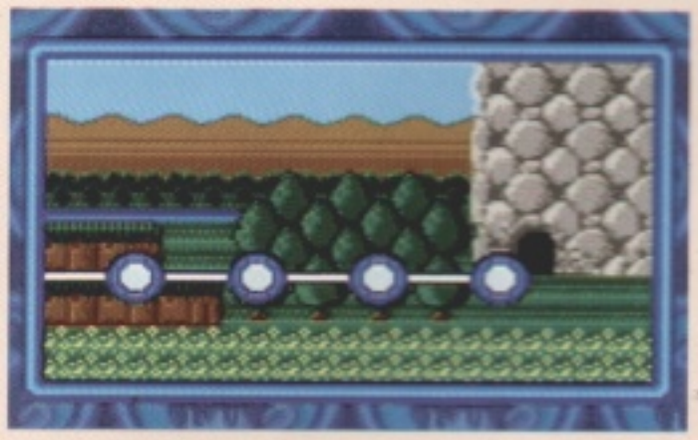
He's got a club to bash baddies with.

He can ride on pterodactyls.

At the end of level one you'll be chased by a huge Tyrannosaurus Rex. Stay out of his way, and collect as many red blobs as you can.

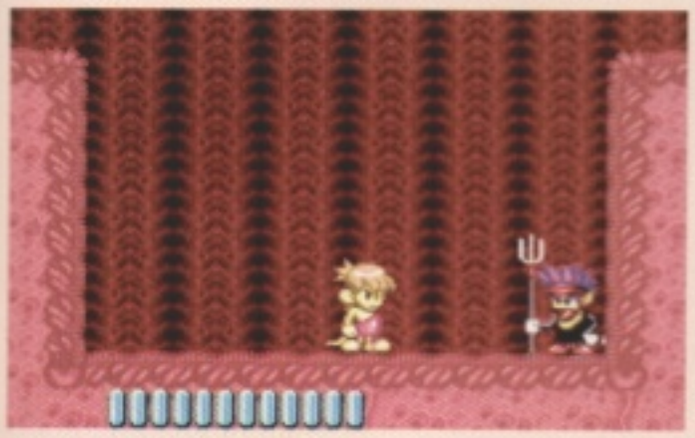
You'll need them, you see, when you reach a dead end and have to turn round and fight him. When you're fully powered up, run across and hit him lots of times.

This level's interesting. (Relatively speaking.) You've got to swing around on the vines that are left in the wake of the fearsome vine monsters.



Your progress through the game is charted on this handy map – there's a fresh one for each level.

On this level you can swim. (Sorry about this. Only one more caption to go, though.)

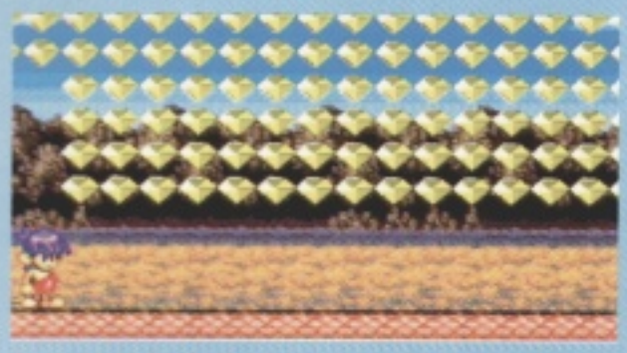


This bit's extremely hard. The baddy flies from side to side, while throwing things at you.

ROOM – OR HAS IT?

Caveman Ninja 2's secret rooms and bonus levels.

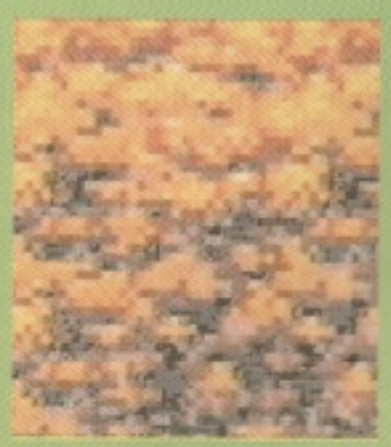
Drop down the first shaft at the beginning of level one and you'll find yourself in a goodie-packed underground cavern-type place.



Jump up onto the L-shaped thing on level one (again) and you'll get carried off by a pterodactyl to this even more goodie-packed bonus level.

Oh yeah, and he can swim, too.

If he gets hit by a baddy, he turns into a monkey (for some reason).



And if the monkey gets hit by a baddy, he, er, dies. And that's that.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

Right, hands up who out there likes *Joe and Mac*. Lots of people do, I know. It's bright and colourful, it's stuffed with amusing touches, and on the whole it's lots of fun – especially with two players. I did have my reservations, though, when I gave it 72% in issue 1. I thought it was a bit simplistic, and didn't really offer enough variety to those who've been brought up on a diet of *Mario* and *Castlevania*.

Well, *Caveman Ninja 2* doesn't have *Joe and Mac* in it, it only lets one person play at once, and it's not very bright and colourful. But in every other respect it's the sequel to *Joe and Mac*. So how does it match up to its illustrious(ish) predecessor? Here, with a unique insight into the *Super Play* reviewing process, are a few extracts from my own special *Super Play* reviewer's notebook.

- The graphics, while slicker than *Joe and Mac*'s, aren't quite as 'friendly' – the sprites are a bit smaller, and the colours aren't as nice. Rookie, in particular, isn't the world's most endearing character.
- There's more variety than in *Joe and Mac* – like the swimming bit, and the swinging-from-vine-to-vine bit, and the secret rooms.
- It's considerably harder than *Joe and Mac*, which was a game that appealed more to youngsters. Some bits are frustratingly difficult, in fact, although they tend to be interspersed with lengthy easy bits. It's a bit patchy, in other words.
- The controls are fiddly, and although they work fine most of the time they can let you down at key moments.
- The collision detection is another thing working against you. It's much better than *Joe and Mac*'s, but is still a little hit or miss at times.
- It'll take you ages to finish, probably, as not only are there lots of difficult bits, but you only get three continues.
- But whether you'll actually enjoy doing it is another matter.

So where does that leave us? *Caveman Ninja 2* is basically a sound game, but it doesn't do anything new, it never rises above the level of 'alrightish', it frequently gets annoying, and there are lots of better games available for the money.

● Jonathan Davies

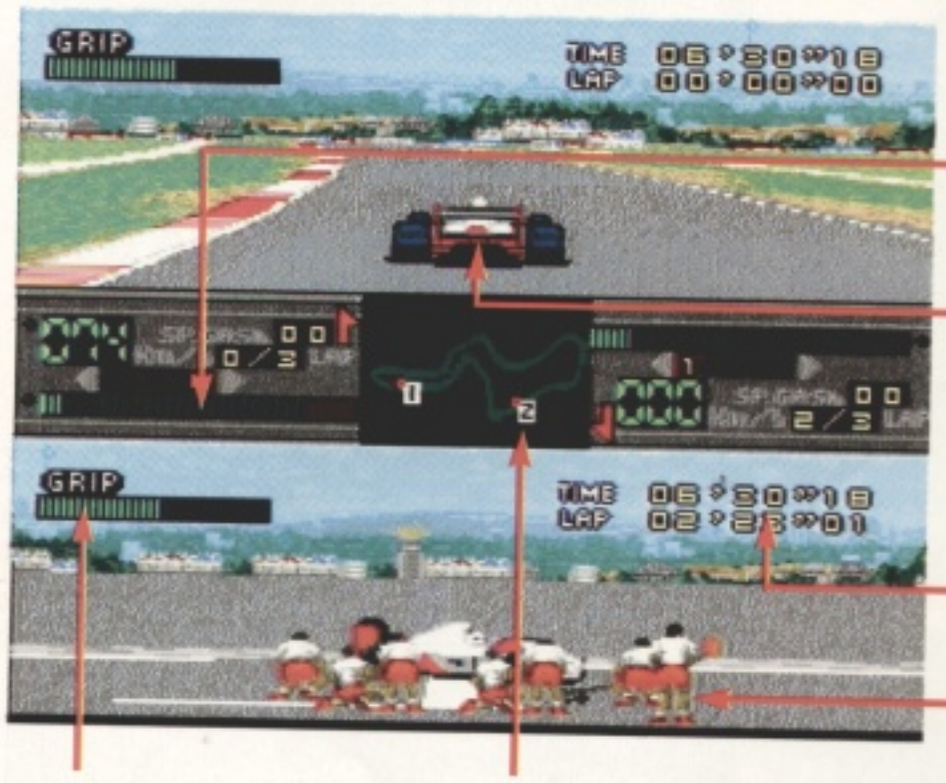
GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
68%	60%	55%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	
70%		58%

VERDICT: This isn't terrible, but there's such a big crowd of Super Nintendo platform games that *Caveman Ninja 2* doesn't have a hope of standing out from it. Lots of challenge, though.

Thanks to Game-On, (081 856 5282), for lending us the cart.

SUZUKI F1

Mention the name Suzuki over here and everyone thinks of learning to play the violin. (*Eh? – Ed.*) But in Japan, Aguri Suzuki is a top racing driver.



The rev counter is handy for working out the best time to change gear. (The automatic gearbox option is even handier.)

Here's Player 1, eating up the tarmac (figuratively speaking) in his super-fast racing car.

Just in case you're not paying attention, these are your time and lap counters. (I'll be testing you later.)

Rather usefully, the grip-o-meter lets you know when your tyres need changing.

Both players share the same map, which shows them whizzing round the track.

Player 2, meanwhile, has driven into the pits for a tyre change. (On the advice of his grip-o-meter, presumably.)

YOU WANT IT YOUR WAY? YOU GOT IT!

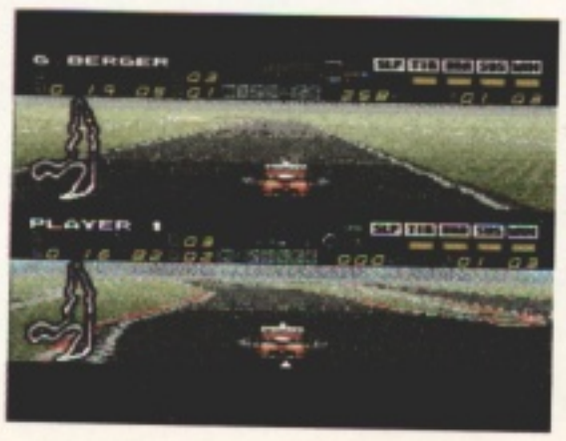
Above: As with just about every driving game ever, you can set up your car before the race to give it the best performance possible. Hundreds of different things can be tweaked over a series of screens.

Above right: Your gearbox, for example, can be changed – there's a range to choose from.

Right: So can the angles of your spoilers. Good, eh?

Left: What could that little red arrow mean? (*It means there's a corner coming up – Ed.*) Oh righghghgh... boomf! Erk.

Right: Here's *Human Grand Prix*, the game's main rival. No UK release date yet.



UK Release

Game: Suzuki F1
Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: LOZC
Price: £45
Release: Out now
Players: 1 or 2 simultaneously
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

Aguri Suzuki F1 Super Driving has been around for a while now on import, and for ages it was the best Formula 1 game available. It's got amazingly fast graphics, it does nice things with tunnels and bridges, and it has a great split-screen two-player mode. Its only significant failing is the way it shows you very little of the road ahead, making it very difficult to anticipate corners and drive round them without crashing. But once you've become familiar with the courses, or enlisted the help of a co-driver to keep an eye on the scanner and shout out warnings for you, this is less of a problem, and you'll probably enjoy the game a lot.

Oddly enough, exactly the same comments apply to the game's UK incarnation, the simpler-titled *Suzuki F1*.

The problem is that *Human Grand Prix* came out last month. *Human Grand Prix* does exactly the same job as *Suzuki F1*. And it does it a whole lot better in almost every way. The graphics are smoother and more realistic. The cars handle more realistically. The tunnels are more tunnelly (though the bridges aren't quite as bridgey). It's a lot deeper-feeling and more involving. And – most importantly – you can see corners coming soon enough to actually do something about them. (The only area in which *Human Grand Prix* potentially loses out is the controls, but even they make sense once you've got to grips with them.)

Suzuki F1 is a nice game. It fills that Formula 1 niche effectively, and you're unlikely to be disappointed having just spent lots of money on it. But there's a definite irony in the way that, just as the Japanese and Americans are getting the decidedly superior *Human Grand Prix*, we're getting *Suzuki F1*.

● Jonathan Davies

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
78%	62%	69%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	72%
75%		

VERDICT: A good, solid driving game which – bar the odd no-warning-of-corners problem – should give you many hours of useful service. That said, it's hopelessly outclassed by *Human Grand Prix*.

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ACTRAISER

SUPER PLAYER'S GUIDE

ENIX (US/JAP/UK)

PART TWO By Jason Brookes

Welcome back! If you were unfortunate enough to miss out on last month's first instalment of this fab action and strategy game, turn to page 94 and send off for a back issue now!

Remember where we got to last time? Well, we covered three of the lands of *Actraiser*. Now here's the game plan for the remaining three areas of the game – Marahna, Northwall and Death Heim.

The land of Marahna

ACT 1 BOSS

1

(That is, if you're stuck in, or are planning to have a go at, the first half of *Actraiser*. Everyone else should sharpen their swords and prepare to tackle the rest of the game. Tally ho!) (*What? – Ed.*)

1 Marahna, or 'the Inca level' (well, that's what I call it, anyway), marks a comfortable start to the second part of the game – making your way to the boss on the far right doesn't require any skills that you won't have employed already. When you reach it (this is one of those bosses you can't really refer to as a 'him'), try and kill the transparent blob-

2

2 like thing first – use some magical stardust if you have it. You'll now notice a green vine creeping under the water towards you. Jump over it and then lure it towards the far left-hand side of the screen. Jump back over it again and quickly make your way back to the platform next to the guardian. Keep jumping on the spot and you'll be able to get in a few hits before the vine returns. Repeat this procedure, and remember to kill the blobs as you do so. Make sure you get rid of them, or they'll cause you problems later.

SIMULATION

3 The most important thing to do in Marahna is cause an earthquake which will join two of the islands together to increase the population. Using the compass lets your people start fishing, and they'll find a source of magic too. Use lightning to clear the top right area of the island, and when you give the people the ancient tablet you'll get the magical aura.

3

ACT 2 BOSS

4 If you have any magic here it's a good idea to unleash it straight away and then try to avoid the platforms as they drop from above. There are two

4

5 main ways of killing the guardian. The first is to step onto one of the platforms and slash at the boss as you rise, remembering to drop off before you hit the top. The other way is to stand beneath him to lure him to you, then, when the spikes start to appear at your feet, move to the side and hack away.

5

Don't hang around too long, though, because he'll move in closer. If you repeat this procedure his hands start glowing and he'll fire energy bolts at you. Jump over them and repeat. This boss is one of the trickier to defeat.

The land of Northwall

ACT 1 BOSS

6 It's best to try and make it to the far right-hand side to defeat this boss, **7** but leave enough room for him to settle in the corner against the wall. When he lands in the corner, hack away at him. This boss can also be hit just before he drops a rock. The swooping movement of the boss can't really be avoided, however, so just try and hack away at him as quickly as you possibly can.

6

7

SIMULATION

As with the other lands there are four lairs to seal, but the bridge-building technique must be learnt before the southern half of the island can be tackled. Shine light on all four corners of the frozen lake – your people will find a fishery and then the magical light. Use

UIDE

ong, though, closer. If you is hands start nergy bolts at nd repeat. This ier to defeat.

orthwall

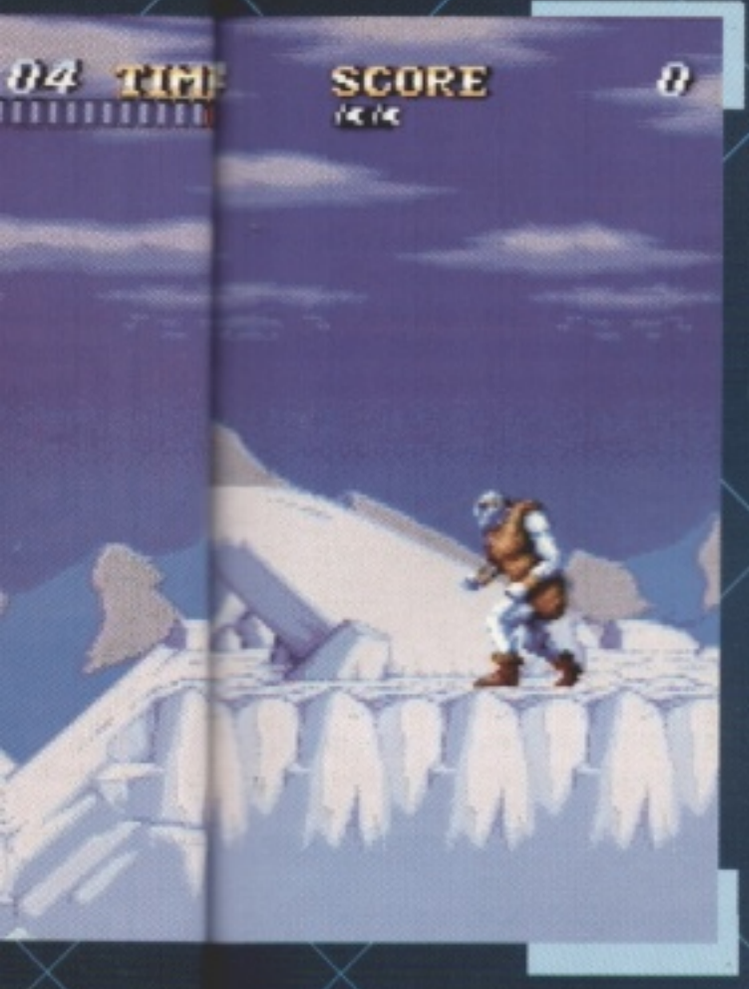
make it to the far defeat this boss, oom for him to against the the corner, hack can also be hit ock. The the boss can't ver, so just try s quickly as you

here are four ge-building before the d can be l four corners people will find gical light. Use

the fleece to warm up your people when they get cold (you can get this fleece in Aitos). To obtain the source of life, send a bolt of lightning onto the temple after your people discover the initials on the tree.

ACT 2 BOSS

This bird is one of the toughest bosses in the game. Keep moving back and forth and try to use magic on him when he swoops. It's important at this stage to try and dodge the blocks of ice that the bird fires at you. When he stops to fire his weapon at you, move in close and hit him with your sword. Strike about two or three times



and then duck. As with most of the bosses just try and lash out at him as fast as possible.

Before you go off to Death Heim it's best to make sure that all the countries are fully developed, and that the homes are at level three (and therefore

earthquake proof). This is necessary for the highest population.

To see if an area can still grow, check the states of each city. If the word 'max' appears next to them, then the population has reached its own limit and can't accommodate any more people. The highest possible is level 17 with 24 hit points, 340 spell points, eight magic points and seven extra men.

The land of Death Heim

Death Heim is different to the other sections of the game in that all you have to do here is fight the six bosses again from the second acts of all the previous lands. The only difference in their attacks is the speed at which they are executed, which is (surprise, surprise) consistently faster. Use the same techniques as before, but try to be (even) lighter on your toes this time.

The minotaur is probably the toughest to hit because he moves so fast. Try to use some magic on him – it's possible to take away most of his energy with the magical Stardust if it's used at just the right time. The demon boss from Bloodpool who changes into a wolf can

easily be killed. When he has changed into a wolfman simply walk away from him, turn and hit him and then jump over and repeat.

When the floating head appears and the meteors rain down, stay in the bottom-left corner and hop over them. If you position yourself the correct distance away from the boss, the two shots it fires will just miss you.

Firing the projectile weapon (that you acquire automatically) at him repeatedly should soon seal his fate.

The second guardian actually has three types of energy blasts to avoid – the first type will pass above and below you and will cross through the centre of the screen. Tackle them by positioning yourself between them as they circle round you. This is done by first moving forwards and letting the energy blast go behind you. Then move backwards and let the second one pass in front of you. Finally, move forwards again and allow the last one to pass behind you. The second type of energy blast is easily avoided – just duck and it'll pass over your head. However, the third type is more tricky and will require a bit of practice – first, duck and fire to take out the bottom energy bolts, and then jump to take out the top pair. The second guardian can only be defeated by shooting its blue orb, but you'll have to wait until its hand drops before you can blast it.

And that's it – you've completed the game! With a bit of luck thrown in, you should now be able to sit and enjoy the longish end sequence. Hurray!

And that's not all – you'll find there's also a new game mode that can

now be accessed from the title screen. To do this just pull down on the joypad and you should see the word 'Professional' appear! This lets you unplug your brain completely – you get to play all of the arcade sequences, without any of the simulation bits to bog you down. Yeah, you're right – it's a bit of an unexciting special mode, but that's what you get all the same.

Thanks to James Ryan (aged 11) from Shoeburyness, Essex, for sending in his tips for *Actraiser*.

THE COMBATRIBES

Another month, another beat-'em-up. This has three heroes, assorted bosses, a character vs character mode, but very little imagination.

Japanese Release

Game: The Combatribes
Publisher: Technos
Developer: In-house
Price: Approx. £50
Release: Out now
Players: 1 or 2 simultaneously
Cart ROM: 12 Mbit

CHARACTER VS CHARACTER

Perhaps the most interesting element of *Combatribes* is this one – a character vs character mode where you can play any of the heroes, or any of the bosses or minor bad guys you've got access codes for, in a straight one-on-one *Street Fighter II*-type situation. You can play this with either one or two players.

Remember the film *The Warriors*? Well, this game uses its basic plot. Street gangs (or 'combatribes') have formed an organisation called Ground Zero, lead by a woman called Splatterhead. Enter our three heroes – a big blonde guy called Berserker, a stockier black bloke Bullova, and the lighter, faster Blitz.

MOTORCYCLE WARHEADS

The levels in *Combatribes* are all very short – only a couple of screens across. In each one a whole gang of lesser thugs attack you, followed by a boss character, usually assisted by a couple more thugs. This first one is set on a seedy street, with a motorbike gang as the villains – the boss uses a large plank to extend his reach, but ain't too difficult to beat.

THE DEMON CLOWNS

The second level takes place in some sort of fairground, with the rank-and-file baddies being a Laurel & Hardy pairing of clowns – great big fat ones (one of whom joins the action by floating down from the top of the screen on balloons) and Joker-like skinny ones. The boss character is a fire-eater, his long-distance attack occasionally causing real problems.

SLASH SKATE SCREAMERS

We're now in an roller-disco, with a whole bundle of purple haired, skate-wearing ice-hockey types ('Slash Skate Screamers') swiftly replaced by a big punk guy with what looks like a huge croquet mallet (!)

STADIUM BARBARIANS

Level four takes us down to the the ball game, but then presents us with a bunch of thugs, led by a mad Red Indian, Windwalker. His tomahawk and big-leaping attack can cause problems, especially for the slower Bullova.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

We seem to be getting a handful of new-in-theory-but-really-nothing-new-at-all beat-'em-ups in for review every month at the moment, and I'm afraid *The Combatribes* is a perfect example. If you're looking for comparisons, this falls pretty much halfway between the *Super Double Dragon* and *Street Fighter II* styles – while there's some (albeit minimal) attempt to add to the main action by having it scroll along *DD*-style, the lack of any pick-upable weapons, and quick appearance of each level's boss character, mean it never really gets anywhere. Indeed, the tiny size of the levels, and only average difficulty of the bad guys, probably means die-hard beat-'em-up fans will cruise right through this – the only section I can see most players coming back to being the hero-vs-hero/boss-versus-boss one-on-one combat bit. This is fine, kind of, but very limited – special moves are virtually non-existent, so depth-packed it ain't.

The Combatribes features a curious visual-style too – one that doesn't seem quite sure whether it's meant to be 'realistic' looking or cartoony. Certainly our heroes, with their overgrown arms, yet tottering (almost mincing) little legs, are hard to take seriously, and are almost completely character free – the boss characters are much more fun to play whenever you get the opportunity. To be fair, *The Combatribes* does occasionally come up with the goods – swinging a baddy around by his heels to knock lots of other bad guys down is always good fun, while the fact that you can sit on a fallen villain's back and bang his head into the ground should appeal to the sadist in all of us for a while – but these good bits are few and far between. A little bit more of this sort of dark humour might have brought the game alive.

As it is, though, the verdict is fairly simple. While beat-'em-up fans will enjoy *The Combatribes* for a while – especially the funny one-on-one section – they're likely to find it too short and easy in the long term, while the rest of us will probably find the game almost impossible to distinguish from a whole host of similar rivals in the first place.

● Matt Bielby

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
59%	50%	53%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	
45%		57%

VERDICT: I was never very impressed with the coin-op original, and this is a similar story. The clever and funny boss-vs-boss one-on-one mode saves things a bit, but otherwise short levels and limited moves equal a remarkably non-essential buy.

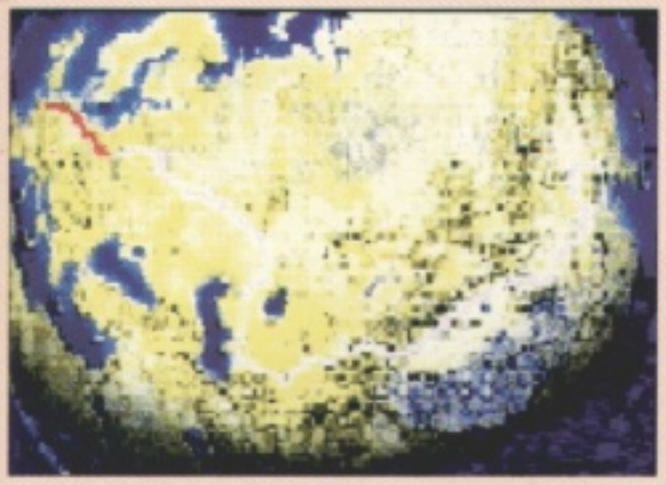
THE KING OF RALLY

If, like us, you switch off BBC2's *Top Gear* when the boring rally bit comes on, you're not going to be too excited by the sound of this. It *is* in Mode 7, though.

Japanese Release

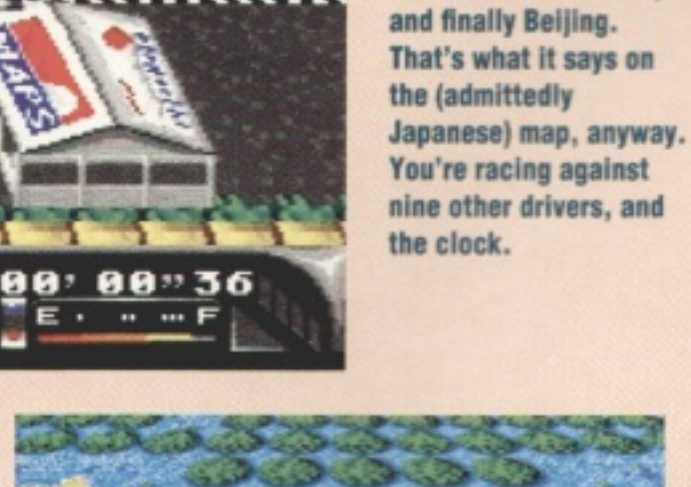
Game: The King Of Rally
Publisher: Meldac
Developer: In-house
Price: £50-£60
Release: Out now
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit

Right, here's the plan. You start off in Paris, and you're got to drive to Warsaw, then Moscow, then Uralsk (*Eh? – Ed.*), then Beyneu, then Bukhara, then Kashi, then Hami, then Wuwei, then Huhohaut (*Are you sure about this? – Ed.*) and finally Beijing. That's what it says on the (admittedly Japanese) map, anyway. You're racing against nine other drivers, and the clock.



If you don't believe us, here's the map to prove it. (Although the names might be a bit titchy.)

Puddles make you spin and crash if you're not careful. Water way to go! (*Leave! Now! – Ed.*)



Above left: On some stages you've got to drive over a series of checkpoints.

Above: While others see you driving round and round, doing lots of laps.

Left: The gears work a bit weirdly. Rather than an accelerator and a gear change button, you've got an accelerator for each gear. So to change gear you move your finger to a different button. This sounds fine, but it doesn't actually work terribly well in practice because of what seems to be some crap programming or something.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

If there's one thing you can say about *The King of Rally*, it's that the 3D scrolling is absolutely brilliant. It's incredibly smooth, and incredibly 3D, even if it does owe its whole existence to Mode 7. If your SNES-sceptical friends sniffed at *Pilotwings* and turned up their noses at *F-Zero*, this'll be the game to convince them.

If there's another thing you can say about *The King Of Rally*, it's that, like 90% of all Super Nintendo driving games, you can't see enough of the course at once to anticipate corners. This isn't much of a problem on the first few stages, but as the corners start getting tighter it gets more and more annoying.

If there's a further, third, thing you can say about *The King Of Rally*, it's that encounters with other road users are few and far between. You occasionally see the odd car chugging around the track, but they're usually going in the opposite direction and aren't actually taking part in the race at all. I suppose that the whole point of rallying is that you've got the road to yourself, but it makes for a pretty lonely game.

If there's a fourth thing you can say about *The King of Rally*, it's that, although it starts off looking very much like a driving game, by the time you get about half-way to Beijing it's turned into a crummy maze game – *Pacman* without the ghosts. And it's a maze game made all the more annoying because of the way you can't tell you're driving up a dead end until seconds before you crash into the wall at the end.

If there's... (*This is becoming slightly tedious – Ed.*) ...a fifth thing you can say about *The King of Rally*, it's that it's not going to take you long to complete the 10 stages. It's more a question of managing to stay awake for long enough, rather than actually being good at it.

● Jonathan Davies

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
84%	62%	35%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE	
30%	39%	

VERDICT: A real disappointment. Brilliant 3D scrolling – it's a very striking game when you first see it – but with very little to actually do.

ANOTHER WORLD

SUPER PLAYER'S GUIDE

THE COMPLETE SOLUTION

PART 2 By Rich Pelley

Continuing from where we left off last issue, here's the final part of our complete solution to *Another World* (or *Out Of The World*, or even *Outer World*, if you prefer) by our resident *Another World* expert, Rich '*Another World*' Pelley. If you want to find out what you've missed, or indeed you would like a proper introduction, best to check out issue 4. For the rest of you, get ready to dive straight in with Section IX (that's 'section 9' for all you non-Roman numeral readers).

In part one of our guide, we took you through the first eight sections. So far, you've fought aliens and avoided all sorts of nasty ends in your bid to escape the hostile alien world your foolhardy experimenting has thrown you into...

Section IX

ACCESS CODE TTCT

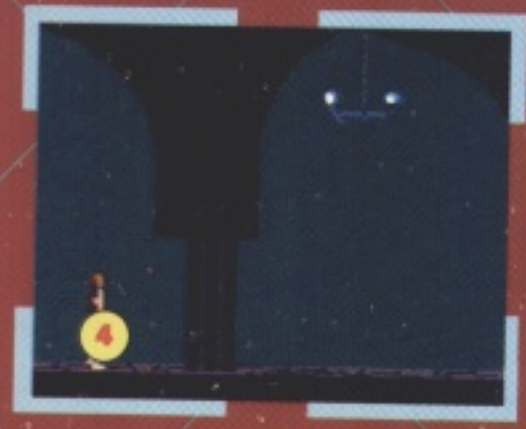
Dive into the water, then swim downwards and along the corridor to the left and up the second vent for a breath of air. This level may well look familiar – that's because it's actually a flooded version of the earlier Section V (see the first half of this guide in ish 4).

Swim down for two screens, climb out of the water to the right of the screen and shoot the power line. Then swim back to the start of the level via the same route, again snatching a breath from that second vent.

Section X

ACCESS CODE XJRT

Run to the right and shoot down the middle light – this releases your friend in the screen above. Return left to the teleporter and teleport yourself to the platform above. Climb the stairs, preparing to take out the guard to the left the instant you enter the screen (if he hasn't already been killed, that is), then walk to the screen to the right.



The door separating you and the guard opens when you get near it. Walk about two paces into the screen and create a shield. Step forward so the doors open and the guard throws a grenade, then retreat quickly behind your shield so that the door closes, and the grenade rebounds and kills the guard.

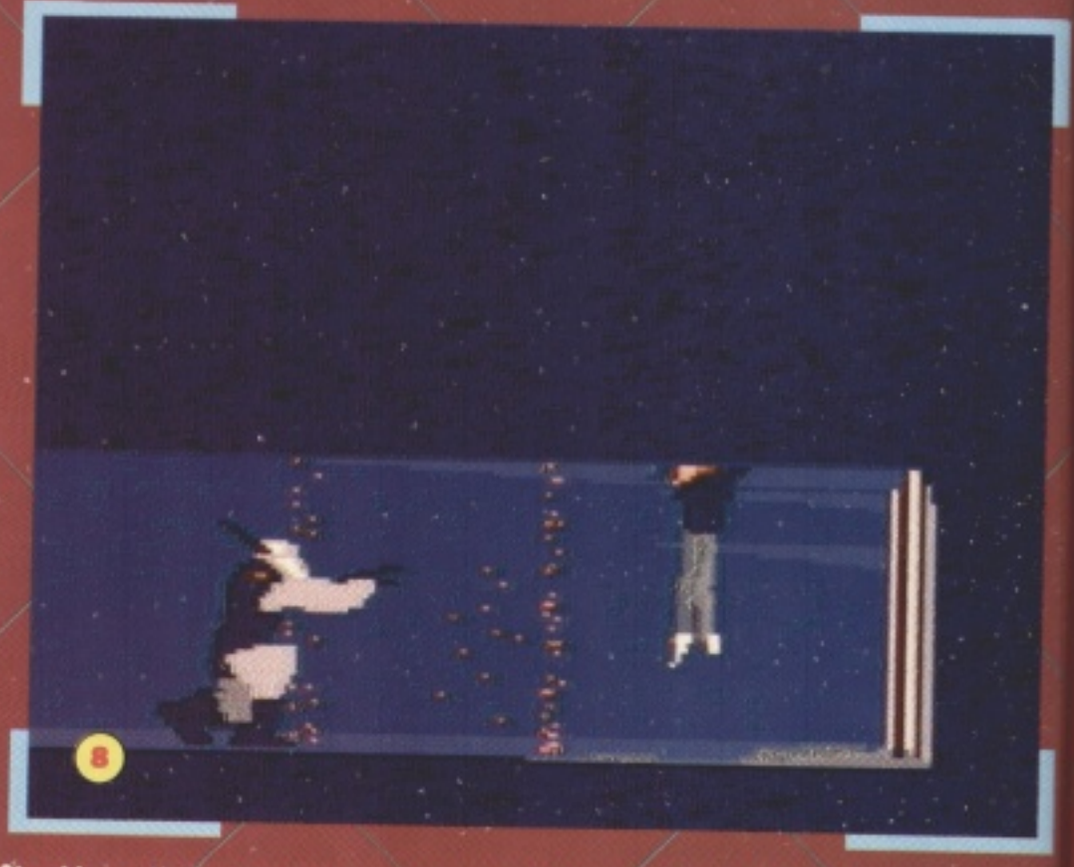
The trick to be used in the room two screens to the right is quite a clever one. Beneath you is an unpassable guard – you should be able to hear his footsteps and see his reflection in the first green ball. Kneel down, wait for the guard to pause briefly under the first green ball, and fire. There's a brief yell, then no more footsteps...

...and no more guard. (Best jump down the shaft to the right quick, before someone notices.)

Section XI

ACCESS CODE HBHK

Don't waste time – just blast open the door to the right and run four screens along (all the other doors open).



Stand beneath the trap door, create some shields, and wait to be pulled to safety.

Section XII

ACCESS CODE TFBB

There was me thinking the SNES version of *Another World* would be exactly the same as the Amiga version that I'd already played – not so! It's taken the game quite a while to get round to it, but here's the first of the two new, exclusive, never-seen-before-on-any-format sections now. (Unfortunately for me, they turn out to be the trickiest sections of the whole damn game!)

Walk to the left, then back to the right in order to go behind the building your friend runs into. Then run through the back door and up to the guard's shield, stick your hand through it and blast him. Your pal takes care of the other guard, after which you should follow him to the right.

Stand slightly in front of the guard and – happily for you – he'll throw you across the gap. He has slightly more problems trying to make the jump himself, though.

Stand at the edge of the gap and take what would be a running jump (using the Y and B buttons). With any luck you should be able to grab hold of – then swing around on – an awning, arriving on terra firma just in time to take care of the two guards who'll now confront you. (We're getting towards the end now – just three sections to go!)

Section XIII

ACCESS CODE TXHF

Run to the left behind the three guards. Nine times out of ten the last guard won't make it through the door, and so will surrender if you point your gun at him. (So pointing your gun at him might prove to be a good idea.) The only danger here is that you have to make sure that you are standing to the right of the door, or he will lock you in. (By the way, that bit about 'nine times out of ten' was a bit of a lie – he actually *never* makes it through the door at all. I was just joking.)

Take the stairs on the screen to the right and barricade yourself in to the right with five or so shields. Stick your hand through and take out the door with a large blast, wait for the guard to throw four grenades, then shoot him.

Face right and teleport down, immediately create a shield, stick your hand through, take out the guard's shield with a big blast, then shoot to kill him – hopefully before he makes a big splattery mess of you.

Teleport down, shoot the powerline, teleport back up and jump down the hole the guard just created with his grenades.

Run over the lasers (don't jump), then walk slowly into the next room. Jump over the gap, pull the lever, jump the next gap and fall down the left side of the hole.

Run two steps to the right and create a shield. Run through it, and keep on going as fast as possible!

Section XIV

ACCESS CODE CKJL

It is at this point that things start to become a bit weird. To escape from the craft, push the button, then move the control pad down, push button, down, left, push button, left, left, up, push button, right, push button, up, push button, left, push button, right, down, right and push button. (Phew!)

Section XV

A bit weird, as I said. From the space ship, you are catapulted into a female-only swimming bath. Disappointingly, all you get to do is run right, create some shields, and kill the guards.

Your chum breaks through the stained window. Not much help, you'd think, but a shot sends you over the edge...

... and a hand reaches out to save you. It's not your pal, but another alien – one who doesn't like you much.

Happily your pal arrives, so crawl to the levers and, as the guard walks under the hole in the ceiling, pull the lever to zap him. Now pull the second lever, crawl back to the light circle on the floor, and escape *Another World*.

● And that's it – you've completed the game. (Easy when you know how, eh?)

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Included with issue two you'll find an immensely pleasant and very high quality 3D feature. There's a poster, complete with several 3D images, and, of course, the glasses to go with them. These glasses also tie in neatly with a forthcoming 3D feature to appear on the GamesMaster TV programme, thus cementing the already strong link between the popular show and the magazine.

It's crazy, it really is. Just look at how much has been crammed into this already over-large magazine. All the news from the entire industry, as well as the best in reviews, previews and of course numerous appearances by that self-styled wizard of the code, the GamesMaster. There's so much going on, it'll make your nose bleed.

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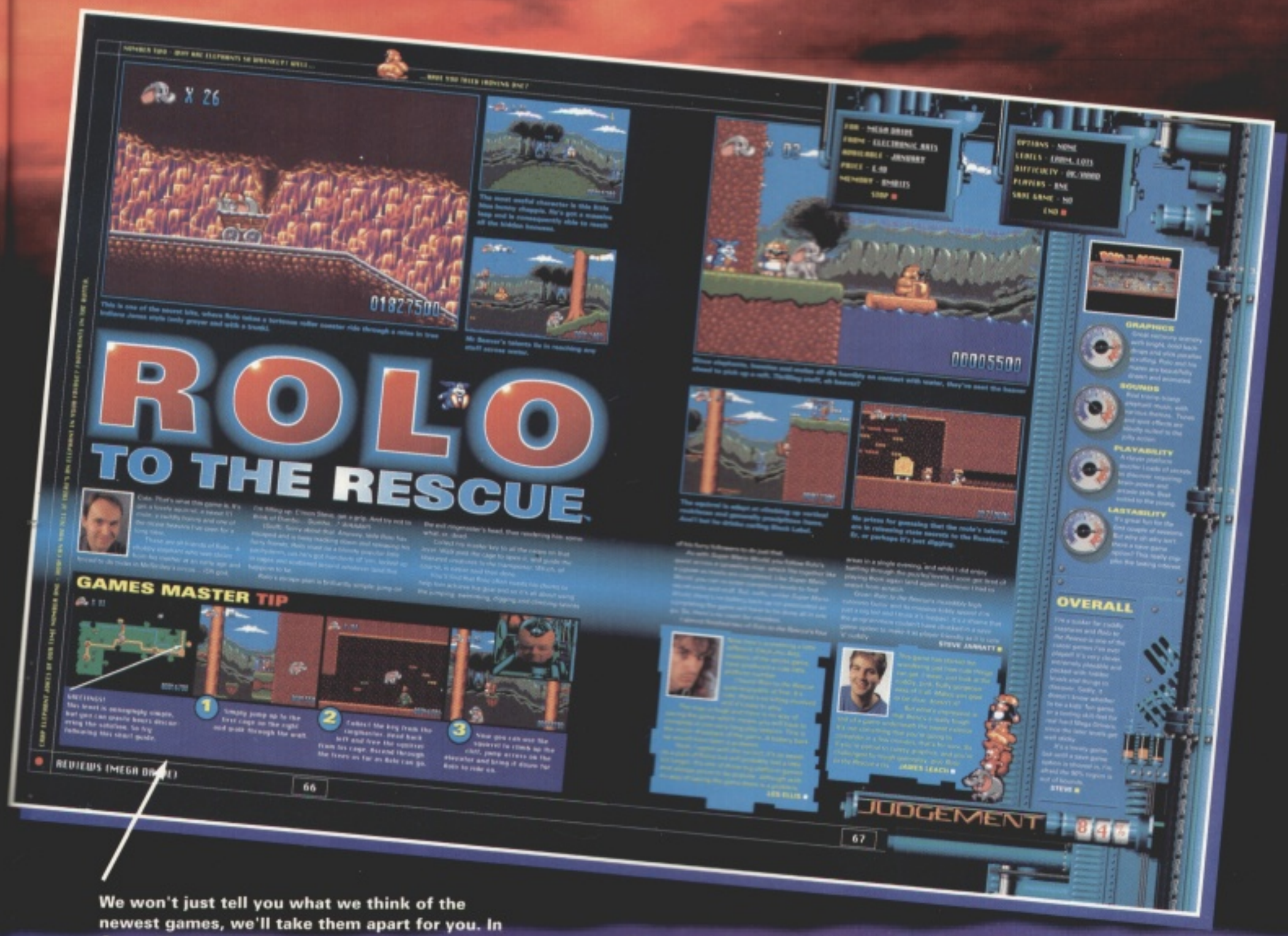

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SYVALION

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Publisher: JVC/Toshiba EMI
Price: Approx £45
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit

Left: Yikes! It's only the first caption, and already our dragon's gone all red, indicating that he's about to die.

Right: Slither past the blue flashing things, and squirm between the aliens.

Eek! It's the giant end-of-level, erm, snail. Watch out for his blue slimy blob things.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

Now this is a weird one – I'm surprised they've chosen to release it over here. If you remember the dragon from ancient coin-op *Dragon Breed* you'll have an idea of what our hero looks like – a snaky thing, made up of connected segments, who can curl into a ball. As with all good dragons, he comes equipped with destructive fiery breath too, though the power runs out after a while, and has to be built up again by giving him a rest.

Unlike *Dragon Breed*, however, there's no little human rider, nor is this a straight horizontal scrolling blaster. Instead you guide our reptilian hero through a set of both horizontally and vertically scrolling mazes, each populated by a series of very alien-looking baddies. Bigger bosses are to be found at the end of each maze, and that, pretty much, is the game.

So is it fun? Well, yes, for a time. Most of the challenge comes from the fact that our dragon chum is very vulnerable. That said, it's a simple game that you'll get bored of quickly. Not, as it says in What Cart?, one to return to.

● Matt Bielby

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
64%	45%	48%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	46%
44%		

VERDICT: Odd central character, which presents its own challenges, but otherwise a fairly unremarkable blaster – and one that fails to ever get very exciting.

PGA TOUR GOLF

UK Release

Game: PGA Tour Golf
Publisher: Electronic Arts
Price: Approx £45
Cart ROM: 4 Mbit

The Tournament Players Club at Sawgrass is proud to present first round action of the PLAYERS CHAMPIONSHIP.
Press START to continue

An ancient Egyptian monument? A UFO? A ginormous piece of Toblerone? Nope, it's the club house.

Above: Before each hole you're given a terrifying aerial view of the course.

Left: Tasteless trousers? Check. Horrible yellow T-shirt? Check. Silly hair cut? Check. Let's tee off!

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

On import there's hundreds of golf games to choose from, ranging from top-notch traditional ones like *Irem Skins* and *Pebble Beach* to weird Japanese ones like *Super Birdie Rush*. As far as official UK releases are concerned, however, there's just the one. This one.

PGA Tour Golf is one of Electronic Arts' earlier experiments with the SNES, and is a conversion of what's generally agreed to be the best golf game on all formats. However, while the mechanics of the game are fine, presentation-wise it isn't ideal. The scrolling is jerky and the colours horrible – robbing the game of the atmosphere essential to a golf game. The ball doesn't move terribly realistically, either. It judders along and suddenly stops, rather than gliding to a halt.

Those are just cosmetic problems, of course. The game plays golf as well as its cousins on the Amiga and PC, and is really quite enjoyable. The controls are easy, the 3D view of the putting green is useful, and the ball goes just where you'd expect it to. It's just that releasing *Irem Skins* or *Pebble Beach* would really have made a lot more sense.

● Jonathan Davies

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
50%	45%	71%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	60%
58%		

VERDICT: Not the best golf game on the Super Nintendo, but a reasonable stop-gap until something better makes it over to this country.

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Game: Prince Of Persia
Publisher: Konami
Developer: NCS Masiya/Arsys Software
Price: £44.99
Release: Out now
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit
UK Release

Fancy a long-lasting, challenging, atmospheric platform game? Try *Prince Of Persia*. Just be prepared to tear clumps of hair out as you play...

Here we are at the beginning of level one, and the only available route is down. Some of the larger drops need careful manoeuvring.

Completely new graphics, and whole sections such as these caves have been added in the Super NES version.

More new graphics. The beauty of *Prince Of Persia* is the variety of the gameplay – here our hero fights a skeleton. Push them off the edge to kill them easily.

Above: After this spectacular flying leap, hang onto the edge of the platform and pull yourself up. Right: Walk slowly through spikes to survive.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

The biggest problem I have with most multi-level platform games is that you have to complete them in one sitting – the major drawback of their traditional lack of passwords. Not so with *Prince Of Persia*, however – it has passwords after each level, and a jolly good thing too. The game is simply too big – so big (and hard), in fact, that newcomers *might* just find the whole thing slightly intimidating.

It would be a shame if they did though – *Prince Of Persia* has been excellent in all its versions, but this is the best yet. All the levels have been redesigned (for the better), and a further eight brand new ones added, making 20 in all (without anyone being tempted to add the word 'Super' to the title either!) Graphics are the most obvious improvement – they're completely new and, despite a few simplistic backdrops, prove very atmospheric. The one thing that hasn't changed is the slightly old-fashioned, flick-screen scrolling, but don't be put off by it – this is one game where it actually works well, in many ways heightening the tension, as you're never quite sure what lies on the next screen.

The animation – obviously *Prince Of Persia*'s main selling point – has been tidied up too; improved by the addition of a few extra frames. When our hero jumps a gap, just catching the edge of a platform with his fingers, his legs swing out beneath him with beautiful fluidity, it's a joy to see – the sort of attention to detail that makes idle passers by stop and watch. Sound is of a similar quality too, though the impressive Arabian scores rather put to shame the simplistic sound effects. Best of all though, gameplay just oozes out of the game: it's a winning combination of puzzles, sword-fighting and platform-style action which all produce a hugely enjoyable game. *Prince Of Persia* on the SNES comes recommended even to players of the original computer game.

● Jason Brookes

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
86%	85%	91%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	
90%		89%

VERDICT: *Prince Of Persia*'s a classic game, and the SNES version has been changed and improved from the original so much it could be mistaken for a sequel. Don't miss it.

Thanks to Shekhana Consoles, (081) 340 8565, for the loan of this cart.

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BEST OF THE BEST

It says karate on the box. But it plays like a kick boxing game. So is it karate? Or is it kick boxing?

US Release

Game: Best of the Best Championship Karate
Publisher: Electro Brain
Developer: Loriciel
Price: Approx. £50
Release: Out now
Players: 1 or 2 simultaneously
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit

HOW TO BE THE BEST OF THE BEST

Each player's energy is shown by these lights. As he takes damage they fade and go out. (So you can, literally, punch your opponent's lights out.)

The ref is an enthusiastic little fellow.

The game is divided up into several rounds. You choose how many before the game. This counter counts down to the end of the current round.

You can tell when you've scored a hit because a little yellow 'flash' appears.

The object of the game is to build up as formidable a player as possible. This is initially done by choosing his name, nationality and appearance, and entering him into a few fights.

There's also this training bit, where you can put your player through various tests of ability (strength, resistance and reflexes). If he does well, he'll come out of it a better player.

If the game looks more like boxing with kicking in it, that's because it's a thinly-disguised conversion of an old Amiga game – *Panzer Kick Boxing*.

Here's a list telling you who's Best of the Best, who's Sort of Alrightish of the Best, and who's Worst of the Best.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

'One must climb the mountain in order to determine the height of Heaven... One must search himself that he might find the way to reach it...' Thus spake Grand Master Kang Suh Chong, of the 10th Dan (if the manual's anything to go by, at least). While I wouldn't say it to his face, I can't help feeling that Grand Master Kang Suh Chong has perhaps suffered one too many roundhouses to the back of the head.

The other thing that bothers me about *Best of the Best* is that it looks horribly like a kick boxing game. I must admit that my experience of karate is limited to a handful of cheaply-made martial arts films, so perhaps I'm not ideally qualified to write this review. (*Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah – Ed.*) But I've always imagined it involved a little bit more than just kicking and punching people. China O'Brien, for example, had a neat line in tripping people up with big sticks. And Jackie Chan was forever foxing his pursuers by running up vertical walls, somersaulting over the top of them and landing elegantly behind them. In *Best of the Best*, though, you're limited to just kicks and punches. And you're standing in a boxing ring wearing boxing gloves. It all smacks horribly of *George Foreman's KO Boxing*.

When a game's as tightly focused as this, it's vital that it does what it does extremely well. And, to its credit, *Best of the Best* features some excellent animation and a wide range of different punches and kicks which it takes a while to learn properly. However, there are also a lot of frustrating moments when the two players are standing alongside each other on the screen and can't hit each other. Or when one player is facing in the wrong direction, and can't seem to turn round to face his opponent. It also seems that, no matter how hard you try to learn how each move works, and no matter how hard you try to discipline yourself into thinking about what you're doing and which move you ought to be using in a particular situation, matches always tend to degenerate into frantic pressing-all-the-buttons-at-random affairs, with the eventual victor being decided more by luck than anything else.

● Jonathan Davies

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
71%	61%	58%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	50%
40%		

VERDICT: For the most part this is fine. But it's extremely limited in scope, and – considering that it's essentially just a simple beat-'em-up – it's hopelessly outclassed by the likes of *Street Fighter II*.

Thanks to Game World, (081) 304 0034, for lending us the cart.

GAMEFREAK

SNES TECH & GAMING ANSWERS

by Jason Brookes

Got a question about the Super NIntendo that's been gnawing at your brain? Desperate to know when that amazing new game's coming out? Don't be shy, ask the Gamefreak – he's bound to know the answer. After all, he *is* the UK's top Super NES expert! He's very cute too. (*No I'm not – GF.*)

Dear Gamefreak,
In issue 4's edition of Gamefreak, a crew of people sent in a whole horde of questions. Question 15 was about the mix up of the bosses' names in *Street Fighter II* in the different countries it's available. You straightened it out by saying that in Japan 'our' Balrog (the boxer in the UK version) is called M Bison. However, in the screenshot of the *Champion Edition*, next to M Bison's (final boss) energy bar, it reads 'Vega'. Does this mean that the Vega with spiked claws we all know is actually called Balrog in the Japanese version?

Also, have you any idea what the M in M Bison stands for?

Andrew Jones, Timperley, Cheshire.

Vega's called Balrog in the Japanese *Street Fighter II* coin-op.

I used to live near Timperley, you know (Lymm to be precise). Anyway, you're right about Vega. The bosses in the Japanese version of *Street Fighter II* (arcade and Super Famicom) are as follows: Sagat stays the same, the boxer is called M Bison, the Spanish bull fighter with the claws is called Balrog and lastly the final boss is called Vega. As for the M in M Bison's name, I think it probably stands for Malcolm.

Dear Gamefreak,
1) I've just bought *Super Aleste* by Toho and the sprite handling is amazing (far better than on any of my Mega Drive shoot-'em-ups). Like you say, it's 'in a league of it's own' in this department. However, I've heard this cart has a Z80 processor inside, and I simply don't believe it – is it true?
2) Have Toho written any other Super NES titles, or are any in development?

Left: Toho's *Birdie Try*. Below: *Mecharobot Golf* – the same game!

3) Are Konami going to bring out sequels to *Contra* or *Turtles*?
4) What is the relationship between Konami, Capcom and Nintendo – are the first two subsidiary companies of Nintendo?
5) Why does everyone from the Nintendo hotline sound so miserable?
6) I've run out of money to buy games with, so could you... (*Snip! – Ed.*)
A great mag. Print my letter and I'll love you forever.
Graham Whittaker, Lemford, Herefordshire.

1) No, there's no processor inside, just a cleverly programmed game.
2) They released a Japanese golf game called *Nobuo Serisawa's Birdie Try* last December (see pic), but we haven't played it yet. Also, at the CES in Las Vegas they were showing virtually the same golf game but with, er, robots. It's called *Mecharobot Golf*. (Looks like you're a bit stuffed if you don't like golf really.)
3) *Turtles* – yes, later this year. *Contra*? Probably, but no news as yet.
4) No, they're completely independent third-party developers. However, Nintendo made sure early on that both companies wouldn't produce games for Sega, NEC or anybody else for that matter. Recently, however, this all changed, and now both Capcom and Konami have started doing Mega Drive games. Don't worry though – they're still far more committed to Nintendo, and it looks like the SNES will continue to get the best games first.
5) If you spent your whole day speaking to people asking you game questions you would be too.
6) Don't be silly.

Dear Gamefreak,
I am the proud owner of a UK Super Nintendo and an Amiga, and I intend buying a Philips 8833 Mk II monitor.
1) Could I run my Super NES on this? Will I need to buy a special lead?
2) Would I be able to stretch the picture to remove the black screen borders?
3) Are there any *Mega Man* games coming for the SNES?
Julian Guy, Wedmore, Somerset.

1) Yes, no problem. The UK machine can either be hooked up with the SNES A/V lead from Nintendo (if you take off the SCART plug), or a special custom nine pin DIN plug from independent retailers. (If your monitor has a SCART socket, hook it up that way. However, *Amiga Format*'s 8833 monitors don't.) Incidentally, imported machines can only be hooked up with a custom nine pin DIN lead if there's no SCART socket.
2) Yes, there's a knob that does just that and it makes all the difference. Commodore's 1084S can do the same. You don't get any increased speed though (obviously).
3) Yes, *Super Mega Man*'s just been announced at the Winter CES! No release date yet.

Dear Gamefreak,
1) On the back of American carts there is a phone number given so you can ring up and they'll answer any queries about the game. Would I be able to phone up from the UK?
2) If yes, how much would it cost?
3) Is there a service like this in England?
4) In my local computer shop, the Japanese version of *Super Star Wars* is £70. This is only an 8 Mbit game, so how come it come it costs more than *Street Fighter II*, which is 16 Mbit but £5 cheaper?
5) Is it worth buying *Super Probotector*, or should I wait and buy *Sensible Soccer* instead?
6) Why are US carts made in Japan?
Peter Makin, Worsley, Manchester.

1) Yes, but phoning the States is very expensive.
2) Check in the phone book.
3) Yes, but they'll only give help for official

releases. The phone number is (0703) 652222.
4) It's all a question of economics. *Star Wars* is only that price because demand is currently exceeding supply in the import market. Importers haven't been able to buy the US version (because Toys R Us have snapped them all up over there) so they've had to order the Japanese version instead, and the wholesalers in Hong Kong (most Jap imports come via Hong Kong) who supply it have bumped up the price because they know the demand is there. However, there'll be an official UK version out soon, so that might be worth waiting for instead.
5) Hmm, that's a tricky one. *Super Probotector* plays an awful game of football, while *Sensible Soccer*... well, if you want to shoot things, forget it. There's nothing for it – you'll just have to buy them both.
6) *All* Nintendo consoles and cartridges are actually made in Japan. In this way the Japanese can control everything from the playtesting to package design.

Dear Gamefreak,
I was considering having my UK SNES converted to 60 Hz, but was not sure if my TV could detect a 60 Hz signal. So, I phoned the manufacturers, Hitachi, like you suggested.
Phone conversation:
Me: Hello, I'd like to know if my TV can detect a 60 Hz signal.
Hitachi person: No.
Me: What, no Hitachi TV can detect a 60 Hz signal?
Hitachi person: Yes, that's right. Is this about consoles?
Me: Yes?
Hitachi person: The Super Nintendo?
Me: Yes. Bye.
In issue 1 I noticed you used a Hitachi TV with a SCART US SNES. Who do you ask if the manufacturer lies to you?
Andrew Buchan, Homerton, London.

Sounds like you're dealing with total idiots, Andrew. (Them, not us.) Are you sure it was a proper technician you spoke to, and not some bloke who was delivering cathode ray tubes or something? Try again, and this time quote your TV's model number and year of make. The TV we showed in issue 1 is the one in Matt's house, and it worked fine. He can't remember what model number it is, but I'll get him to find out and I'll print it for you next issue.

Dear Gamefreak,
1) How come I couldn't find your magazine in any of my local newsagents? I've subscribed as a result.
2) Is there any difference between *Area 88* (Jap) and *UN Squadron* (UK)?
3) Why don't you ever slag off anybody (ie, say how sad the Mega Drive is)?
4) How many Super NES' do you own?
5) How many games do you have for the SNES?
6) In issue 3 you said there was a free goody bag stuck to the back. Is this true, because I didn't get it?
7) I'm looking for a side scrolling beat-'em-up. I already have *Street Fighter II*, so what do you recommend?
8) Why do all mags rate *Mario IV* so highly? I got bored of it in a week.
9) What's *Super EDF*, and is it any good?
No name supplied.

1) There are too many magazines around, and newsagents often don't have the space. Try a subscription (as you've done), shopping around, or specifically ordering it from your newsie (see the Mag Save coupon on page 98).
2) Just the name and Japanese text.
3) Mega Drive owners are having a bad enough time as it is, without us depressing them still further. Besides, we don't want to be held responsible should any of them decide to 'pop their clogs' or something.
4) At the last count, 17.
5) Too many to be bothered counting.
6) It was cunningly disguised as a wall planner.
7) *Final Fight II* sounds well worth the wait. Yes, I know I said last month there probably wouldn't be another *Final Fight* game, but Capcom have just announced they are now developing a sequel – and Chun Li will make a (very fleeting) guest appearance! We've no pictures of it, however, 'cos they wouldn't let anybody take any at the Las Vegas Consumer Electronics Show (CES).
8) For a platform game it's incredibly well designed. You're just weird.

Super EDF from Jaleco – pretty but shallow.

9) It's a very pretty shoot-'em-up from Jaleco, only available in the States and Japan. It's very lukewarm in the gameplay department, though, so don't fret too much.

Dear Gamefreak,
1) In issue 1 you rated *Super Mario Kart* 93%, but in issue 4 it got 94%. Why?
2) Will *SFII: Champion Edition* come out for the Super NES?
3) Will there be a really good *Wrestlemania* game for the Super NES?
4) Will the four-player adaptor be any good?
5) Is *Desert Strike* better on the SNES than on the Mega Drive?
6) Will *Jordan vs Bird* ever be out on the Super Nintendo?
7) Will Super NES games go down in price? If so, how much?
Ashley Wing, Devon.

1) We decided we liked it even better the second time round.
2) Dunno yet. I can't see Capcom releasing exactly the same game on SNES as the one that's due to appear on the Mega Drive soon. Perhaps they'll release the new Turbo version of the *Champion Edition* instead?
3) There a new one coming from Acclaim later this year.
4) It's fab. Read about it on page 56.

NBA All Star Challenge from Acclaim/LJN.

GOT A PROBLEM?

See a specialist! In this case, the Gamefreak, who'll do his best to answer any Super-Nintendo-related queries you could possibly come up with. Send your questions off to him at Gamefreak, *Super Play*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. We'll print you an answer as soon as we can.

5) Only slightly.
6) There's no news on that, but Acclaim's *NBA All Star Challenge* is coming and it looks brilliant (see pic left).
7) Who can tell? For more details on this, however, check Super Express this month.

Dear Jason,
1) Since *Mario IV*, *Zelda 3* and *Castlevania IV* are all on the Super NES, is the NES finished?
2) If *Mario V* and *Zelda IV* will be on CD ROM, how can you save game positions? CDs don't have battery back-up.
3) If these games *are* released on CD ROM, does that mean people without a CD ROM unit won't be able to play them?
4) Will there be some sort of Pro Action Replay for the CD ROM?
5) Are there any good Ninja games on the SNES, like *Shinobi*?
6) Is it true Capcom are making *Street Fighter II: Champion Edition* for the Mega Drive?
7) How will the CD ROM be powered? Through the SNES, or with a separate powers supply?
8) How much will the CD ROM and games be?
9) How much data can a CD hold?
Keith Chung, Crosskeys, Gwent.

1) It's certainly on the way out, but some top companies are still supporting it. Capcom have just released *Mega Man 5* for it, for instance.
2) Oh yes they do! Check out the new information on page 12.
3) Er, yes.
4) It sounds doubtful.
5) No, but *Spiderman & The X-men* has similar gameplay.
6) Yes, Sega have actually confirmed it now. It's finished and will be out in March or April.
7) Probably by a separate power supply like the Mega CD.
8) The CD ROM player will cost ¥27,000 in Japan (approx £135). Expect it to cost a lot more in the UK though.
9) About 500 megabytes (4,000 megabits).

Dear Gamefreak,
1) Please could you review *Super Adventure Island* on the SNES.
2) Can you put some tips and cheats for it in *Super Play* too?
3) Can you play your Super NES in a different country and how?
Vanessa Gil, London.

1) It was reviewed in our second issue and received a healthy 75%.
2) We'll try and put some in soon.
3) It depends where you go. In Germany it's compatible, but the Secam system in France could cause problems. To be honest, I'm not entirely sure. (Game Boys work fine, though.)

MODE 7

CALLING ALL CHEATS, CRACKERS, AND GAME FREAKS!

Here it is, the section Mode 7 readers have been waiting for – it's... Mode 7! Four pages of pure, 100%, bang-up-to-date tips. And then, of course, there's Ask Ade. (Er, hang on, that didn't come out quite right.) Ask Ade is the 'help' section – write to it if you're stuck in a Super Nintendo game and see if Ade knows the answer.

The thing to bear in mind, though, is that Mode 7 would be nothing without your input. We need you to send us all the hints, tips and cheats you can muster. Everything that gets printed wins a fabulous *Super Play* pen, and if we're *really* impressed we'll send you a fabulous *Super Play* T-shirt too. The address to write to is: Mode 7, *Super Play*, Future Publishing Ltd, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

John Madden '93
(Electronic Arts)

Although the following might resemble the utterings of a man with a grapefruit stuck in his throat, they're actually a set of codes for the Super Nintendo's top American football game, *John Madden '93*. And they've been sent to us by Ben Issacs of Cardiff.

PTHNBBLD – Madden Greats vs Buffalo '92
PTMNFBVD – Madden Greats vs All Madden
PTSNFCGF – Madden Greats vs San Fransisco '84
GHHCBBVB – Philadelphia vs Washington
GHMCDBHC – Philadelphia vs Green Bay
GHSCDDDC – Philadelphia vs Cincinnati
GDGFBBSB – Buffalo vs Houston
GDLFDBFC – Buffalo vs Oakland
GDRFDDMC – Buffalo vs Green Bay

The Fridge meets Oscar? Select your favourite teams with our fab codes.

James Bond Junior
(THQ)

Here's some level codes:

Level 3: 0007
Level 4: 3675
Level 5: 9025
Level 6: 1813
Level 7: 3353

003½ looks nothing like his dad.

ASK ADE

INVALUABLE MONTHLY GAMING ADVICE

Well, at last. Things have finally started picking up in the old game problems arena this month – indeed, I've been snowed under with your cries for help. Even better, I've actually had a few solutions in from some of you for problems other readers were suffering with, and that I couldn't answer, so well done to the guys who sent them in – you know who you are. Still, enough with the idle chit-chat, let's get down to business.

First, we'll kick off with the gameplaying problems I can answer myself.

● Please could you tell me how to get to the second exit in *Super Mario Bros IV*, the Red Switch Palace. Thanks.
Joe Leon, Romford.

● Piece of cake. I actually did this last night, strangely enough. Just swim along until you see a single block just above the water, then jump out over it to the right. Carry the switch back over to the left. When you can't go any further, activate the switch and drop it down the left hand gap. There – you're sorted. Hope that was of help.

● Can you give me any Action Replay codes to play the bosses in *Street Fighter II*? Many thanks.
Robert Driver, London.

● Sorry, Rob. Even with the help of an Action Replay, you can't control any of the bosses. You can, however, fight against the bosses in different countries. Try this:
Player 1: 7E0ED10 X
Player 2: 7E0CD10 X
If you put in any value from 8, 9, A, or B where the X is, you can pay Vega in Brazil, or Sagat in China. Have fun.

LOST SOULS

Time for those problems I'm stumped on myself, or can only offer a partial solution to. If you know the answers to any of these questions, why not write in to help me out, to the address at the bottom of this column.

● I need some help on *Dino City* (US), especially level five. Basically, I can't get past the ropes. How do I do it?
Mark Underwood, St Albans.

● I dunno, Mark. *Dino City* (or *Dinosaurs*) is one of the easiest games out there – you can't really be that stuck on it, can you? Anyway, what do you mean by the 'ropes' bit – is it the sequence near the end with the platforms that move up and down? (Probably the hardest bit of the game.) All you have to do there is keep jumping from one platform to the other, though getting the timing right is very difficult.

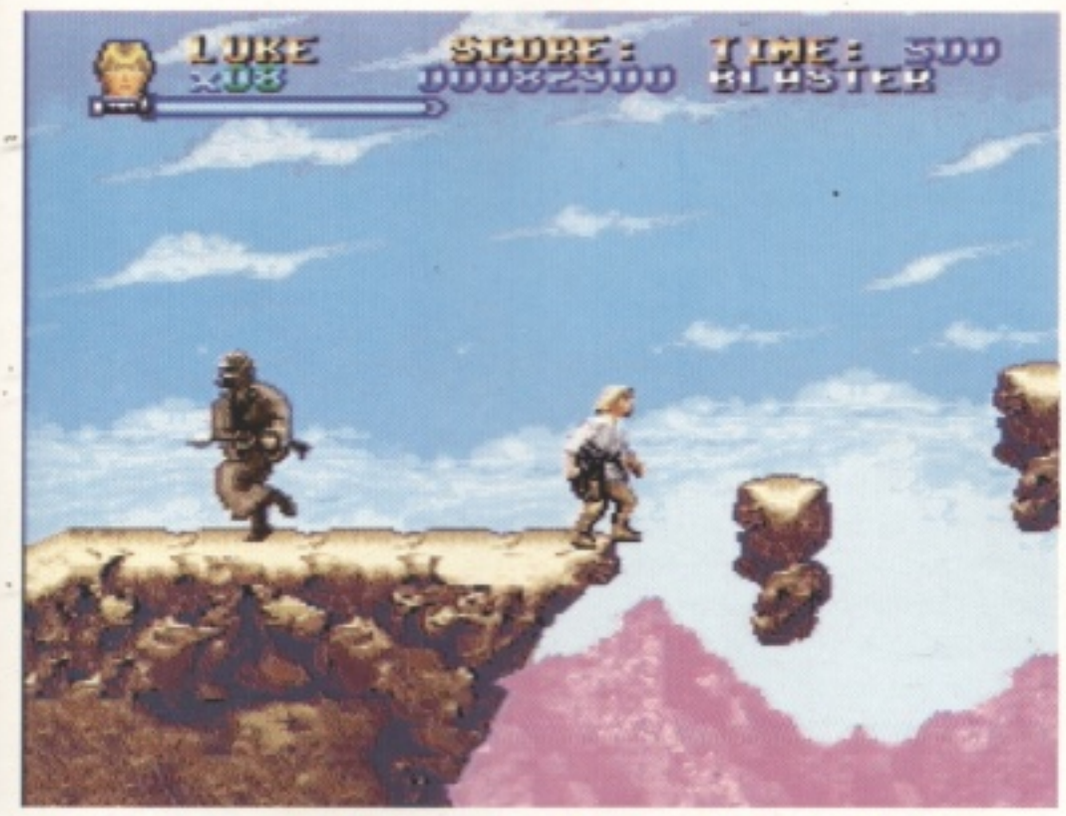
● I've got to the seventh level of *Soul Blazer*, having released all the souls in the two torture rooms and the basements. However, there is a guard who needs a platinum card before I can get into the castle, an upset musician without a harp string, and someone who has a harp string but is too lazy to move. Please Ade, me old chum – can you help?
Darren Bamford, Nottingham.

● Sorry, 'old chum' – if you're on level seven you've done a much better job of

Super Star Wars
(JVC)

'On level five – Land of the Sand People,' says Alan Mitchell of Glasgow, 'just before you meet Obi Wan, you have to cross a ravine which involves jumping from block to block. However, there's a secret room containing extra lives which can be found by falling off the edge of the cliff (before jumping onto the first boulder). Just fall and push LEFT on the controller, and you'll find yourself in a room. Lives will appear if you shoot around the cavern with your blaster – there are seven altogether.'
The best thing, though, is that the process can be repeated as many times as you like. Just collect up the lives, step off the ledge into oblivion and repeat ad infinitum. (Well, until you've collected 99 lives, anyway.) This makes the game an awful lot easier to complete, although, of course, you've got to make it to level five in the first place.

Don't make the mistake of falling down here, or you'll die.



Fall down here, however, and you'll be able to kit yourself out with 99 free lives.

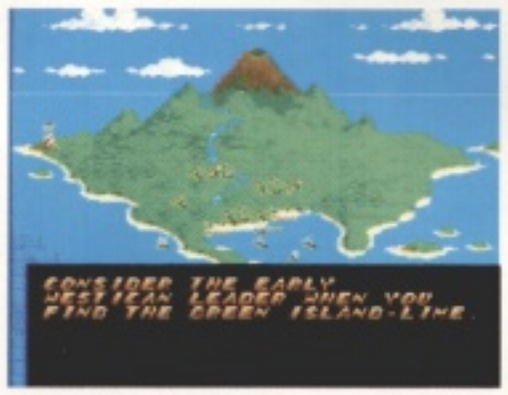
Sküljagger
(American Softworks)

Here are some passwords, which'll see you through to an incredibly difficult bit where all these dogs jump at you.

CRUEL MAN CRUEL BIRD
CLAW IS MEAN DOCK
BIG WILD ANGRY FLY

On the screen showing the island before each level, if you press R, then L, and then R, you'll be given some hints on how to find warps and secret bits.

Now you too will be able to play fabulous bonus levels like this one.



Some helpful advice for those who know where to look for it.

Mario Kart
(Nintendo)

Mario Kart! Here's this month's tip – a rather niftier than usual short cut that's been pointed out by Nathan Wilkins of Calne. It's for Bowser's Castle on the Mushroom Cup, and is pretty tricky to get right, but if you do you'll save yourself loads of time.

What you've got to do first is find yourself a feather. Then, on the long straight with the three turbo-arrows on it, over on the right-hand side of the track drive over the arrow on the right – the one that's on its own. As you hit it, hold left and you'll go whizzing towards the wall. Just before you hit it, use your feather and you'll land on the little island the other side.

Oh, and another tip while we're at it. (Is there no end to them?) On a two-player battle game, when one of the players has been reduced to one balloon, try getting him to hold down B until his last balloon is burst. The screen will go dark, but he'll still be able to drive around. Weird, eh?

The bit we're on about is down in the bottom left there.

the game than me (I gave up after level two, being such a busy man and everything). However, we're going to be running a complete Super Player's Guide to the game in the near future, so if you're still stuck next month we should be able to help you out a treat.

● Please could you help me on *Super Star Wars*. I wondered if you have any cheats (but not the one where you fall off the cliff and get five lives – I know that one already).
Lewys Johnstone, London.

● Again, you're way ahead of me – I don't even know that cheat, let alone any others. No doubt you'll have *Super Star Wars* players up and down the country jumping off every cliff they can find to see if they can get the extra lives.(*Check out the cheat just above Ade! – Ed.*) We'll soon be running a Super Player's Guide to this game too, though, (*Nest ish – Ed*) so look out for some hot tips there.

● Please could you give me the last two codes for *Desert Strike* (US) as I'm finding it pretty difficult.
Matt Vaughan, Hereford.

● Sorry, I've never bothered writing them down, I just play the game straight through, so I don't need 'em. (Alright, aright – that was a bit of a lie. Why not check out Jonathan's Super Player's Guide to the game on page 50 for the details instead?)

PROBLEMS SOLVED!
Hurrah for these guys! They've helped me out with other readers gameplaying problems from past issues, that I've been unable to answer

● After reading about L Green's problem with *The Addams Family* in *Super Play* issue 2, I think I've found the solution. Try the following password BLRRR. This will give you five hearts, 36 lives and you'll have rescued Pugsly, Wednesday, Granny and Uncle Fester, with only Morticia to find.
Nathan Bridgeman, Leigh-on-Sea.

● Cheers, Nathan! If you can help sort out any more of our stuck readers, send 'em in!

● Here are the UK passcodes for *Krusty's Super Fun House*:
Level 2: Skinner
Level 3: Scratchy
Level 4: Bartdude
Level 5: Bouvier
Ade, Bristol.

● Cheers Ade. I'm sure that'll prove a little ray of sunshine in the life of the poor distressed fellow who was stuck on that game a few issues back.

● Here's the solution to the problem Lewis Sparshatt of Selsey was having in issue 3 with *Super Ghouls 'n' Ghosts*:
At the beginning, quickly get hold of the Gold Armour (working up through the power-ups).The next chest you open will release two fairies which will turn into a bracelet and drop to the ground. Once you've picked this up you'll have the magical weapon, but there isn't a set point in the game where this has to be done. Once you've got the weapon, you'll keep it even if you are hit, but if you pick up another weapon without the armour, you'll have to get the magical one all over again.
Andrew Hutchinson, Todmorden.

● That's the spirit. Cheers Andy, and hope that sorts out your problem Lewis.

And that's all we've got space for this month. Remember, send your questions (and answers to the ones I'm stuck on!) to: Ask Ade, *Super Play*, Future Publishing Ltd, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW and we'll see if we can 'sort you out.'

Super Mario World
(Nintendo)

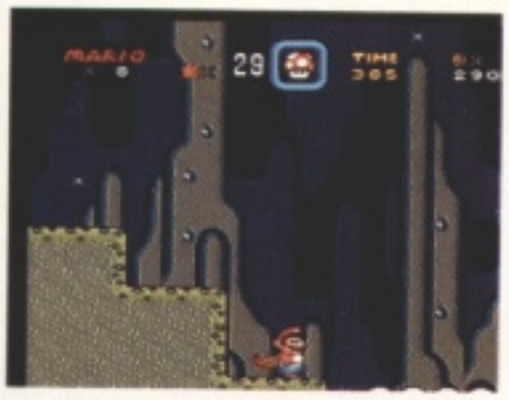
Issue 3 of *Super Play* contained a massive guide to *Super Mario World*, covering every last square inch of the game. Erm, apart from these bits. They've been drawn to our attention by Joel Williams of Wirral.

DONUT GHOST HOUSE

Immediately fly up to the left against the wall through the gap. Land and run right. Keep going over the wall and fall down to collect four extra lives and to gain access to the never-been-seen-before Top Secret Area. Here, if you're small Mario you can get two mushrooms, two fire flowers and Yoshi. If you're already

To get to the Top Secret Area you'll need to jump up here.

Super Mario you get Yoshi, two fire flowers and two cape feathers. You can go onto this level any time, and it doesn't take up your go if you're playing two-player. You can keep accessing this level with Yoshi to get the maximum 99 lives!



Here's Vanilla Dome 3, the scene of many a secret bit.

MORTON'S CASTLE

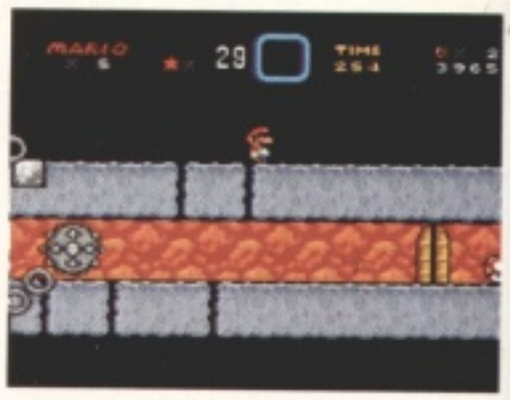
At the very start of this level, avoiding the Thwomps, fly up and left through the gap in the ceiling. Land, and go right, and then go down the green pipe to find a bonus game.

VANILLA DOME 3

a) Go along past the first skull raft, past the three pipes and onto the second skull raft. Before you get to the orange pipe, take off up and to the left – here there's a 3-up moon.

b) After the second orange pipe, fly up and right, and land. Then go down the crater and back up. Pass the two Buzzy Beetles and go into the green pipe for a bonus game.

c) Come out of the green pipe, go right past the skull raft, past the halfway tape, past the next skull raft, past the red beetles, over the ledges, killing the two Buzzy Beetles. Now fly up and right and land. Go right, jumping over all the chocolate plants (below there are three orange and two green pipes). Hit the P block to create a stairway down to the finishing tape.

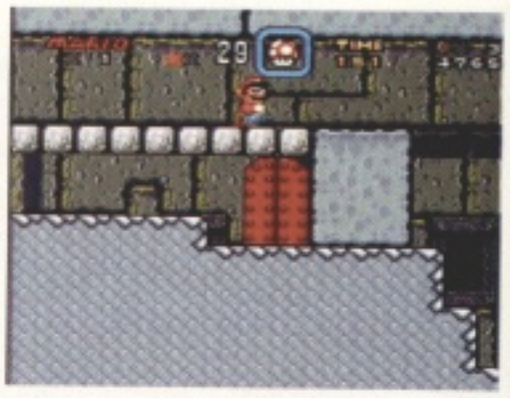


That block of stone behind Mario isn't actually a block of stone at all.

LUDWIG'S CASTLE

Go right along the orange corridor and, just before the door, jump up where there seems to be a small block of stone. Go up/right on the stone blocks to a green pipe which leads to a bonus game.

Make it up here and you'll be able to go through that green pipe. Coo.



Here we are in the Forest Fortress. Don't go through the door just yet!

FOREST FORTRESS

Near the end, go past above the red door. Use the cape to take off, flying over the lava, as near to the ceiling as possible, avoiding all the fire balls. Eventually you'll see nine yellow blocks, each containing extra lives. The red Guardian door is also here to get to the Renzors.

Fatal Fury
(Takara)

Whereas *Street Fighter II* players can't control their bosses, *Fatal Fury* players can! What you've got to do, according to Scott Elliott of Clevedon, is choose Player 1 from Joe, Terry or Andy. When you're asked to choose Player 2, press DOWN on Player 2's joypad. You'll then be able to choose from another eight characters.

The snag is, how do you get their special moves to work? Fear not, for Scott has that covered too. (These all assume you're facing right.)

MICHAEL MAX

LEFT, RIGHT + Y – Charging uppercut
Y rapidly – Devastating combination
LEFT, LEFT – Evasive jump
DOWN, DOWN/RIGHT, RIGHT, UP/RIGHT, UP + Y – Tornado uppercut

RICHARD MYER

DOWN, UP + Y – Handstand kick
DOWN, DOWN/RIGHT, RIGHT, UP/RIGHT + B – Flip kick

DUCK KING

LEFT, RIGHT + Y – Rolling attack

Behold! Eight more characters to choose from.

LEFT, DOWN/LEFT, DOWN, DOWN/RIGHT, RIGHT + A – Rolling throw

TUNG FU RUE

Little Man:
LEFT, RIGHT + Y – Power punch
Monster:
DOWN, UP + B – Flaming spin
LEFT, RIGHT + Y – Flying spin punch

HWA JAI

DOWN, DOWN/RIGHT, RIGHT, UP/RIGHT + B – Speed thrust kick
RIGHT, DOWN/RIGHT, DOWN, DOWN/LEFT, LEFT + A – Back breaker throw

RAIDEN

DOWN, DOWN/RIGHT, RIGHT + Y – Sand blast
DOWN, DOWN/RIGHT, RIGHT, UP/RIGHT + Y – Choking grab

BILLY KANE

LEFT, Right + Y – Cane spin attack
Y rapidly – Cane combination

GEESE HOWARD

LEFT, DOWN/LEFT, DOWN, DOWN/RIGHT, RIGHT + Y – Lightning wall
DOWN, DOWN/RIGHT, RIGHT, UP/RIGHT + Y – Strangle hold
Now check out the Action Replay codes.

Two-player games will be a lot more exciting now.

Super Smash TV
(Acclaim)

We told you how to get a level select screen in issue 4 – go to the player/select options screen and press RIGHT, RIGHT, UP, DOWN, R and L.

But what we didn't tell you (for various highly technical reasons) is that if, before you go into a new room, you press and hold SELECT, the next room won't have any baddies in it and you'll be able to walk straight through unscathed. This makes the game a great deal easier, if a little tedious. It still beats playing basketball, though.

Well, that's got them sorted out. (Er, you won't tell anyone, will you?)

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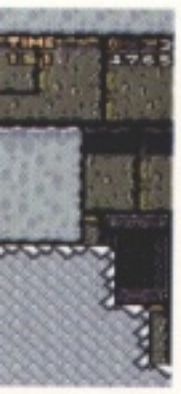

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ACTION REPLAY CODES

If you've got an Action Replay cartridge, you'll be able to use these codes to cheat at games. (If you haven't got an Action Replay cartridge, there are details of how to get one on page 87.)

GAME	CODE	EFFECT
Death Valley Rally	7E1F2002	Infinite lives
	7E1F1E06	Infinite energy
	7E1F1D30	Infinite nitros
	7E1F8450	Infinite time
Fatal Fury	7E06135F	Invincibility
	7E107A0A	Do a special move, pause the game and turn on the Action Replay to do continuous magic
Mickey's Magical Quest	7E02B105	Infinite hearts
	7E037202	Infinite hearts
Robocop 3	7E185402	Infinite lives
Street Fighter II	7E0C030C	Continuous special moves plus...
	7E0E2010	
	7E0C2010	New moves and stuff
Super Star Wars	7E08FB03	Infinite lives
	7E0A7920	Infinite energy
	7E91E86C	Infinite time

Our thanks, and *Super Play* pens, to Barry Clough of Dunfermline, Anthony Bekesi of Letchworth and Scott Elliott of Clevedon.

Legend of the Mystical Ninja

(Konami)

Nobody's sure if we can expect a UK release of this, but lots of people have the Jap version. So, here are some codes – from Stephen Rowland of Wigan.

LEVEL 5

1;YMM 57M%– JmkM?
v:MΔΔ %8M?9 M?JM!
W

LEVEL 6 WITH MOUNTAIN PASS

hRPgg q"go" k=rgV
91gzz ❤tgVv gV/o❤
K

LEVEL 7

BHKwq h:qwP nhTqd
8Zqpp 7gqdt qdnqm
y

No, our typesetter hasn't gone horribly wrong. This is what the codes look like.

LEVEL 8 WITH TRANSLATION BOOK

hRDqM oVgO3 ❤qJgV
91gzz ❤tkVv qV%❤t
p

LEVEL 9

o<gTL 8DLLP z@LLn
19L❤❤ z<H6: LXHL❤
R

Super Double Dragon

(Tradewest)

Here's a tip that'll give you unlimited continues when you're playing with two players. What you've got to do is start a two-player Mode A game, and play until each player has one credit left. When you're asked if you want to continue, both players should press START at the same time. Next time you're asked whether you want to continue you'll find that both players have seven credits. You can do this as often as you want.

Street Fighter II

(Capcom)

More *Street Fighter II* Action Replay codes than you've ever seen in your life! So many, in fact, that we've given them a box of their own. They were sent in by Andy Davidson of Bournemouth. (Even the really, incredibly useless ones.)

PLAYER 1	PLAYER 2	EFFECT
7E0E2010	7E0C2010	*Street Fighter III*! (Sort of.) New moves, combinations and the ability to hit the other player even when he's falling to the ground
7E0C6010		Three times the speed
7E0CD10x	7E0ED10x	Choose player's character, where 'x' is replaced by a digit from 0-B
7E1A5A0x		Choose country, where x is number of country
7E0C5600	7E0E5600	Super-fast moves
7E0C3680	7E0E3680	Super-quick walk
7E0C3080	7E0E3080	Super side-to-side jump
7E0CB909	7E0EB909	Super-fast fireballs/slide
7E0CB90D	7E0EB90D	Super-slow fireballs
7E0C3210	7E0E3210	Low gravity and hyper dragon punch
7E0C3220	7E0E3220	Low gravity
7E0C3240	7E0E3240	Hyper dragon punch
7E0C2BB0	7E0E2BB0	Invincibility
7E0C5F10	7E0E5F10	Invisibility
7E0C4E10	7E0E4E10	Levitation 1
7E0C4F10	7E0E4F10	Levitation 2
7E0C4F10	7E0E5810	Freeze player
7E0C50F0	7E0E50F0	Stop player being thrown sideways
7E0C3480	7E0E3480	Turn player upside-down when hit
7E048300		Bloody characters
7E049100		Bloody clothes for Ryu/Ken
7E049BF0		Electric Ryu/Ken
7E048F0F		Stripy headband for Ryu/Ken
7E049E0F		Red belt for Ken/Ken
7E049F05		Green belt for Ryu/Ken
7E049FF5		Blue belt for Ryu/Ken
7E049DF0		Pink hair for Ken
7E049DFF		White hair for Ken

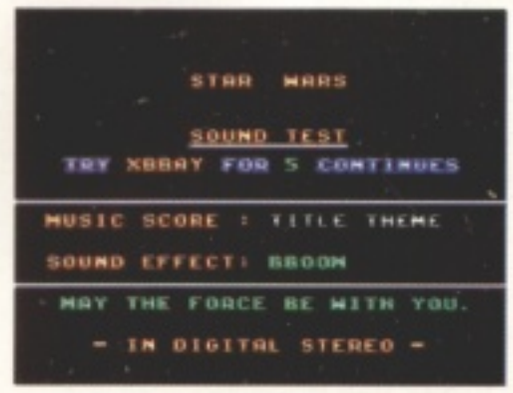
The queue at the newsagents on the day *Super Play* comes out? No, actually.

Star Wars

(JVC)

Given that the music in this game is so fabulous – just like the film's soundtrack – a sound test is a virtual necessity. It's lucky, then, that there is one. Start the game, hold Y, B, X and A and press START. You'll be able to go through the game's whole range of music and sound effects. Check out the smart TIE Fighter noises, the light saber, R2-D2 and all the land speeder effects.

But there's more! If you keep going in and out of the sound test, messages will appear at the bottom of the screen which will change each time, eventually revealing a couple of cheats: for five continues, press the buttons in the sequence X, B, B, A and Y, and for a light saber press Y, Y, X, X, A, B, X, A. These should both be done on the start/options screen. And if you've been using the sound test, you'll have to switch the machine off and on again.


STAR WARS
SOUND TEST
TRY XBBAY FOR 5 CONTINUES
MUSIC SCORE : TITLE THEME
SOUND EFFECT: BBOOM
MAY THE FORCE BE WITH YOU.
- IN DIGITAL STEREO -

Throw away your CD player! It's the *Super Star Wars* sound test.

PLAY BACK

HYPER EXCITING READER'S VOICE

This month: some nonsense about *Castlevania IV* not being any good; *Mario Kart*; Jason's credentials questioned; the world's youngest *Mario* player; *Parodius*; *Mario Kart* again; Super Nintendo sports games; and plenty of other things. Lively, topical, interesting – Play Back is all of these, and more!

'IT'S EXCELLENT'

My letter concerns the compatibility of *Super Mario Kart* – the Jap and US versions. My friend Steven Roberts bought the game from the local computer shop on Jap import. He lent the game to me and when I got it home I used it with *Mario IV* in the back of the adaptor. The game was playable but not great. The tracks kept cocking up and putting you in different places on the course. But when I put *Super R-Type* in the adaptor *Mario Kart* worked perfectly, even in Battle Mode. I told Steven about this and he said he didn't like the game much anyway, so he offered to swap it for my copy of *Final Fight*. Of course, I didn't decline the offer. Now I own *Mario Kart* and it's excellent – more fun than *Street Fighter II*.

At least *Super R-Type* is good for something!

Yours,
James Tuffin, Clacton.

'THE WEIRDNESS OF SIMON'

A few months ago I bought *Super Castlevania IV* after reading rave reviews in nearly every console magazine and being assured that 'this is the game every SNES owner should buy'. However, when I tried it out for myself I discovered a few small unfortunate details that the reviews left out.

First of all the difficulty level is set way too high, though I have to admit that I'm not the world's best player. But to be sent back four levels when you die is a bit much to swallow.

Then there's the weirdness of Simon: his odd 'moonwalking' up stairs (backwards!) when he's not supposed to, his walking through stairs (and often falling) when he should be walking up them, and his falling through stairs (just out of the screen) which he'd just climbed a few seconds ago – where did they go? Perhaps Drac has a really bad termite problem!

Then there's the music. Although it's technically fine, it was just so out of place. I was reminded of a small smoke-filled Parisian bar, and felt that at any moment a beatnik wearing a beret would lean over my shoulder and whisper 'Dig that crazy sound, man... those cats are really smokin'!' (*We're losing him... – Ed.*)

Anyway, my cart has taken a one-way trip to Germany. So long, farewell and good riddance!

Enough whinging, here are some tips:

Did you know that a plain showercap makes an excellent SNES cover? Perhaps you could get some made with *Super Play* printed on the top and give them away on the cover. What do you think?

If you have a PAL Super Nintendo connected to a Commodore 1083S monitor (or similar) you can stretch the picture to fill the screen by rotating the Vertical Size knob on the back to give you that 'arcade' look just like the NTSC SNES' do. (But it won't speed things up, of course.)

Did you know that Nintendo are going to produce an Amiga version of *F-Zero*? Well, it's true! And they've included a demo of the forthcoming release on the *F-Zero* cart! Here's how to see it for yourself. Plug in an ASCII pad and start the game as usual. Then, when the race begins, hit the slow switch on the pad. (Apologies to all Amiga freaks.)

End of tips.

I had an idea. When reviewing a game, could you give an idea of play-sprite speed. Perhaps you could do it in 'Mario points' (because nearly everyone has *Super Mario World* and knows his average speed). Here's how it works: *Mario* equals 100. If you were to review *Castlevania IV*, for instance (urk! urk!), Simon might have a speed of -50 whereas Sonic (yeah, I know) would rate at around +60 (average walking speed) to +100 (flat out). (*Zzz... – Ed.*)

Keep up the good work. Your mag's brilliant. It's the amount of actual reading that I like. I normally fly through most mags in around 10 mins, but it took about two hours to go right through yours. More interviews and techie stuff, please. Could we see the actual machines the games are programmed on?

Yours,
Peter WT Sims, Victoria, Australia.

Super Castlevania has its faults, but we still think it's a brilliant game – especially once you really get 'into' it. And, since reading your comments about the game's music, Jason has been pacing around the car park pounding his fist into the palm of his hand. Interesting idea with the 'Mario points' (though I think we'll let it pass), but does anyone really want their Super Nintendo sitting in the corner of the room with a shower cap on it? Can't see it myself. Your last 'brilliant idea' may have potential, though. We'll see what we can do. (Although *Super Play* will never, ever turn into a techie magazine – shudder.)

'BLESSED BE PARODIUS FOR REMAINING UNSCATHED'

AAAAIIIEEEE YOU SWINE!! There I was, happy as Larry (or, more aptly, Harry), as I prepared my Xmas lists. What would Santa bring me? Nothing, he's a myth. No no, he's a mythter. Anyways, I carefully chose three SNES games to give myself on day 25, and these be they: For anime-type action – *Ranma 1/2* and *Parodius*! For American comic book happenings – *Spidey & X-Men*! Yay! Posting my order, I happened to snap up *Super Play* issue 3. And what news?? An advanced version of *Ranma 1/2*? Better graphics? *X-Men* less than mindblowing?? Blessed be *Parodius* for remaining unscathed. Sad now.

Harry Healy IV, Glasgow.

Super Play would like to stress that not all our readers are completely bonkers.

THE SUPER PLAY INTERESTING-O-METER

If you want to maximise your chances of winning a badge, keep an eye on what's hot and what's not in Play Back.

HOT

- Games and your health
- Do you agree with our reviews?
- Anything Japanese

NOT

- The price of games
- Adaptors
- Anything with 'Hz' in it

'WHIZZ POP'

Ha ha! Whizz pop! You've made a cock-up! Yes, you have. On the cover of issue 2 you wrote 'We strip *Zelda III* bare!' The snag is that your cover picture (with Link and Zelda) showed Link nude, not Zelda!
Yours sincerely,
Sam Ho, Oakham.

Doh. We *did* 'strip *Zelda III* bare' – inside the magazine was a massive in-depth feature on the game. And if you look a little more closely at the cover you'll see the line 'And poor old Link doesn't get off too lightly either', referring to Link's divested condition. So ner.

'I JUST CAN'T PLACE THE OCTOPUS'

Upon buying Konami's *Parodius* recently, I quickly realised that the player's characters have all appeared in previous Konami games: Vic Viper from *Gradius*, Twin-Bee from the game of the same name and Pentarou from some obscure MSX game of the mid-Eighties. But I just can't place the Octopus's previous appearance. Can you help?
Yours faithfully,
Chris Wood, London.

Our extensive research on the subject suggests that the octopus is, in fact, a new character, invented especially for *Parodius*, which perhaps explains his heavy presence in the intro sequence. Of course, someone out there may know differently.

'ISN'T THAT AMAZING?'

I decided to write and tell you about my sister, Janine, who is only four. The thing is that she can get to Cheese Bridge, Butter Bridge and Tubular on the Special Zone of *Super Mario World*. Isn't that amazing?
Anon, Ilkeston.

It *is* pretty amazing. You're right. Do any other readers have talented younger siblings? If so, we'd love to hear from you. (No, really we would.) Write, with a photo if possible, to 'Isn't That Amazing' at the usual *Super Play* address.

'VIEWS OF MR BROOKES'

Could I make three points?
1) First, a wish. Would it be possible to research and publish a list of those television sets most likely to work with a 60Hz SNES? I'm trying to buy a new set at the moment, but even the manufacturers of those that interest me most (namely Philips and Sony) are unable to confirm that a US SNES will work. It's most frustrating.
2) And now a complaint, re your review of *Amazing Tennis*. I would question the views of Mr Brookes – I think that this game is the most realistic sports sim yet. He says that you can't see where you're serving. May I suggest that he goes onto a real tennis court and checks the view from the base line? He says that David Crane may never have played tennis at all. A cursory glance at the instructions will reveal that Mr Crane does indeed play tennis to a very high standard. Mr Brookes says that you can't see the sprite at the other end of the court. By my reckoning, this sprite is larger than those in *Super Tennis*. As for simplistic gameplay, tennis is a simple game, but to play well is not so easy. The same applies to this game.
3) Finally, another wish. When you come to review *Human Grand Prix*, please, please can you do a full feature. It's an absolutely superb game, but I feel that I may be missing out on some of the features due to my lack of proficiency in Japanese. I can't wait to see if you think it beats *Super Mario Kart*. Oh, and please, please don't say that the steering system is too difficult – that's the whole point!
Yours faithfully,
RJ Faragher, London.

1) It's a nice idea, and we'll certainly consider it, but it would be a complete nightmare to do – especially if the manufacturers are as unhelpful as you say. Our advice is to take your US SNES down to the TV shop and try it out. We suspect that you'll find just about any new TV will work, with Philips and Sony tellies being particularly safe bets.
2) Jason concedes that David Crane *does* actually play tennis, but stands by his other points.
3) We hope our review in the issue 4 fitted the bill.

KINDLY LEAVE THE STAGE

Although we're rapidly beginning to regret starting it, this is the 'jokes' section of Play Back. As from this month we'll be awarding scores out of 10 to your jokes. Five or above wins a T-shirt.

Have you heard about Bradford City's new signing? It's Salman Rushdie. They're expecting 35 million to turn up on Saturday.
Daniel Bridgeman, Bristol.
1/10

These two mice went up to heaven and when they got there God asked them whether they liked it or not.
'No,' they said, 'it's too big.' So God gave them roller skates.
Then these two cats went up to heaven, and God asked them whether they liked it or not.
'Yes,' they said, 'there's meals on wheels.'
Matthew Casey, Petersfield.
2/10

A man goes into a chemist's and asks for a bar of soap.
'Certainly, sir,' replied the assistant. 'Would you like it scented?'
'No thanks,' said the man, 'I'll take it with me.'
Kathy Szeputi, London
0/10

The address to send your jokes to is... (*Don't do it! That's a direct order! – Ed.*) Kindly Leave The Stage, *Super Play*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

'I'M PROBABLY ADDICTED'

The reason I'm writing is to congratulate you on your *Mario Kart* Challenge feature. I'm hooked on the time trial part of the game, and I have been playing since mid-December to try and improve my record times.

My best time so far on Mario Circuit 1 is 1' 07.09", made up of laps of 13.47/13.45/13.38/13.45/13.34. My best lap on the circuit is 12.93 – so if I could only get a 'turbo start' and put together five record laps I'd be able to lower the time. However, try as I might I cannot better 1' 07.09"!
My tips for a fast time are:
- Always try and get a turbo start, as described in your magazine – which is essential to a time of 1' 08" or lower.
- Bowser is the fastest character on this course.
- If you do a time better than 1' 11" you'll get a shadow to chase. This helps you take a better time on each corner to improve your times.
- The corners are where the lap times are won and lost. Do not let the character skid around corners – this wastes time. Rather, ease off and then back onto the accelerator – this keeps the character straight and stable and lowers your times.
- Take a 'racing line' on each corner, clipping the red and white edge but not going onto the dirt, which will ruin any record attempt.

I'm probably addicted to this game, as I'm trying each night to improve previous best times. (I won't bore you with my records on the other courses!) Anyhow, why not run a lap times feature? I suppose you could get readers to send in pictures to prove their times.
Kind regards,
Alan Carter, Knebworth.

We've all got some way to go, unfortunately. The official Nintendo record on Mario Circuit 1, which is updated weekly in Japanese magazines, is currently 0' 59.92". That's using Bowser.

Impossible, surely? But, no, this is the official Nintendo time.

'AM I REALLY GOING TO HAVE TO BUY A MEGA DRIVE?'

Having bought a SNES for my son, I have continued to buy your mag since the first edition to ensure that he buys only the best games and doesn't get ripped off. I am pleased to say that all your reviews have been spot on, and in every game he has had value for money.

This, however, brings me to my problem. I would now like to buy some really good sports sims to play myself.
1) Football: *Super*

Soccer and *Kick Off* have obvious faults and not even the good things said about them in your reviews would tempt me to buy them.
2) Golf: *PGA Tour Golf* is *the* golf sim on every other system except the Super NES. Should I have bought a Sega?
3) American football: *John Madden '93* is the best around, but it's not quite as good as the Mega Drive version and is jerky in comparison. Should I have bought a Sega?
4) Ice hockey: *NHLPA Hockey* has juddery graphics and is not 'the game EA's world-beating Mega Drive version is'. I think I might have to buy a Sega.

Now, I know that most of the time it isn't the fault of the SNES, but that of the software company's conversions. This doesn't make me feel any better, though, knowing whatever sports sim I buy for the SNES, someone, somewhere is playing a better version on the Mega Drive.

Am I really going to have to buy a Mega Drive if I want to play a top class sports sim, or is there any sign that a decent software company somewhere is going to get their act together?

Yours frustratedly,
David King, Blackpool.

You can't be serious, surely? There are some brilliant sports games on the Super Nintendo. The Mega Drive's got nothing to touch *Super Tennis*, *Super Basketball* or *Super Fire Pro Wrestling 2*, and while *Super Soccer's* not perfect, it's twice as good as anything on the Mega Drive. We'd agree that Mega Drive owners get a slightly better deal as far as *Madden '93* and *NHLPA Hockey* are concerned, but the Super Nintendo's versions are just as playable as the Mega Drive's – and that's what counts in the end.

Besides, the forthcoming *NHL Football* from Konami and *MVP Football* from Capcom should leave *Madden* for dust, and *Hit The Ice* from Taito is looking okay too. As for golf games, check out *Irem Skins*, or, if you'd like a little more depth to the gameplay, *Pebble Beach* or one of T&E's other games. By all means buy a Mega Drive if you can afford it, but you won't be using it an awful lot – not if it's sports games you're after.

'BLESSED BE PARODIUS FOR REMAINING UNSCATHED'

✍ Can I have your thoughts on a few points?
3) I see that Amstrad have launched a PC capable of running Mega Drive games. Are there any plans for a similar venture with the Super Nintendo?
7) Is it true that Nintendo are considering a Virtual Reality add-on for the SNES in the late 1990s?

Yours,
David Shand, London.

3) Apparently a company in the US makes a Super NES board for the PC, but we don't know what they're called or anything. It seems like a pretty daft idea anyway.
7) More than likely.

Sorry about 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9, by the way, but space was a bit tight in Play Back this month.

'NINTENDO SEAL OF APPROVAL'

✍ I have owned a Super NES for six months now, and have enjoyed virtually 99% of the games I've played on it, the only real stinkers being *Combat Basketball* and *Sonic Blast Man*.

I heard recently that *Micro Machines* on the NES failed to get an official Nintendo seal of approval, maybe because the game didn't live up to the required standard. But, if this is true, why do Nintendo allow such rubbish to be produced for their machines, like the aforementioned games and others such as *Pitfighter* and *Home Alone*? Is it because Nintendo think the games are worthy of approval, or could it be the amount of money the software company has to spend on approval?

Thanks,
Julien Holden, Blackburn.

When Nintendo 'approve' a game, it's not really the game's quality they're looking at. Quality is a very subjective thing, and – believe it or not – there are people out there who actually *enjoy* games like *Pitfighter* and *Home Alone*. What they're mainly checking is whether the games actually work as they're supposed to. You know – whether it's actually possible to complete them without cheating, whether there are any bugs in them, whether you can find yourself stuck and unable to continue for some reason, that sort of thing. This is a lengthy process, involving lots of play testers and video tape.

The excellent NES game *Micro Machines* didn't get approval because Code Masters didn't seek it. They decided to 'go it alone', much to Nintendo's disdain.

HIGHLIGHTS

I was reading that you are taking on a Japanese correspondent. How about taking on a Scottish one?
Craig Mooney, Shotts, Scotland.
Erm... we'll bear it in mind.

I think you can be generally chuffed so far; three issues and the quality of the reviews, previews, news, reports and all-round great humour of the mag are consistently excellent.
Richard Sadler, Kidderminster.
Thanks, but – crikey! – how about buying a bigger biro?

In all my 18 years of life I haven't come across a magazine with so many happy faces as you lot.
D Banford, New Ollerton.
We reckon it's something they put in our coffee.

Which is the best, the Pro Action Replay from Datel or the Game Genie? Perhaps you could do a piece in your magazine comparing the two options.
PA Hobson, Newport.
Nah, they'd never go for it.

That all we've got room for this month. If you've got anything you'd like to say, or a question you want to ask , we'd love to hear from you. Don't forget there's a fabulous *Super Play* pen if you get your letter printed. Write to us at:
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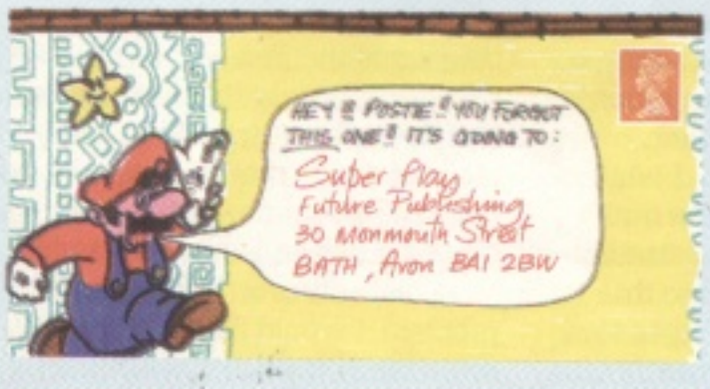
SUPER PLAY ENVELOPE ART

Jez Bridgeman, Keynsham, aged 20

Sue Grant, Bath, aged 29

Matt Bielby, Bath, aged 27



Traci Rochester, Bristol, aged 26

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Mandy Woolven, Taunton, aged 18

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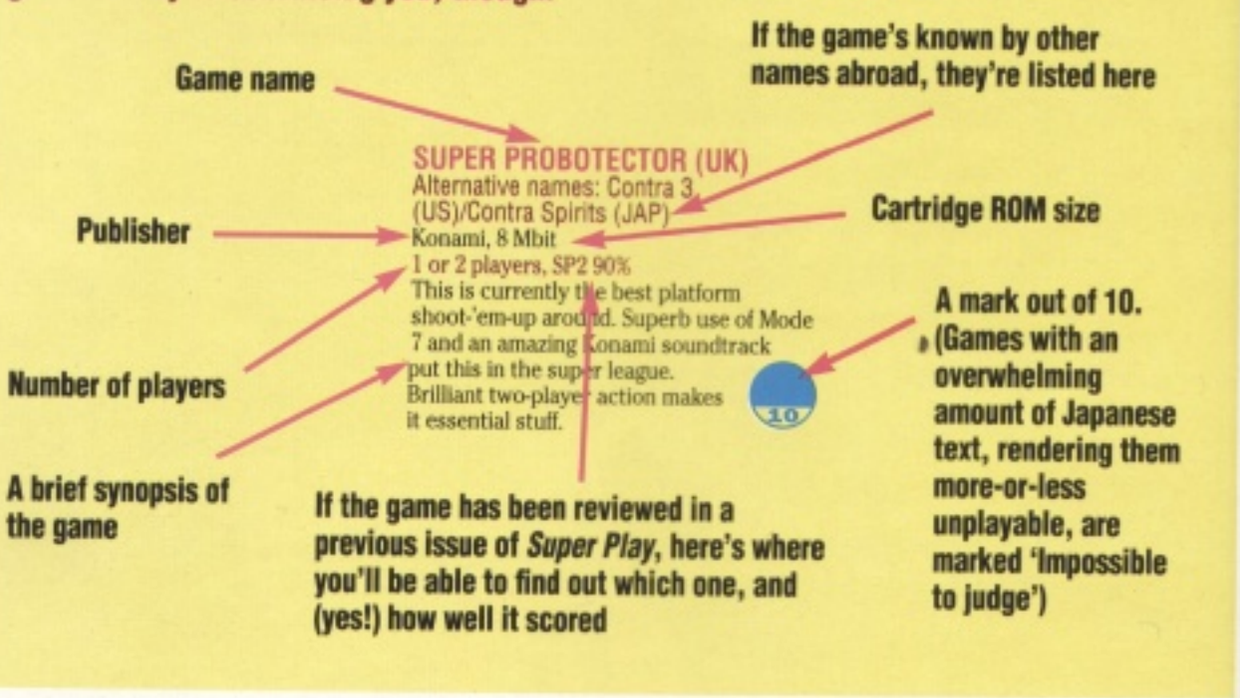
SUPER PLAY'S GAME LIBRARY

Welcome to What Cart?, *Super Play*'s complete guide to every Super Nintendo game available worldwide. Think of it as a living organism, growing and adapting to keep pace with the ever-changing SNES scene. (Or something). You can look games up in it, disagree vehemently with it, memorise it, read it in instalments to your children, or line your kitchen drawers with it. We're looking at roughly 180 entries this time, every one of them explained and rated, so if it's a comprehensive guide to Super NES games you're after you've come to the right place.

• To the best of our knowledge, *Super Play* covers every Super Nintendo game in the world. (Obscure, incomprehensible Japanese strategy games aside.) But we can't rule out the possibility that one or two games might have slipped through the net. So if you've played a game that isn't in What Cart? we'd love to hear from you. Just jot down a quick What Cart?-style review of the game, with all the relevant details, and send it to the address below. If we use it we'll send you a T-shirt. That address is: What Cart?, *Super Play*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

KEY TO YOUR CHART

You wouldn't believe how easy *What Cart?* is to understand. Perhaps this diagram might go some way to convincing you, though:


Game name
If the game's known by other names abroad, they're listed here
SUPER PROBOTECTOR (UK)
Alternative names: Contra 3 (US)/Contra Spirits (JAP)
Publisher
Konami, 8 Mbit
Cartridge ROM size
1 or 2 players, SP2 90%
This is currently the best platform shoot-'em-up around. Superb use of Mode 7 and an amazing Konami soundtrack put this in the super league. Brilliant two-player action makes it essential stuff.
10
Number of players
A mark out of 10. (Games with an overwhelming amount of Japanese text, rendering them more-or-less unplayable, are marked 'Impossible to judge')
A brief synopsis of the game
If the game has been reviewed in a previous issue of Super Play, here's where you'll be able to find out which one, and (yes!) how well it scored

ACROBAT MISSION (JAP)
Teichiku, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP2 38%
A despicably feeble vertical scroller. (Not a good start.) **3/10**

ACTRAISER (JAP/US/UK)
Enix/Quintet, 6/8 Mbit + BB
1 player, SP2 90%
A brilliant combination of strategy and platform action. Graphically it's well done, but the visuals are left eating dust by the fab music. Buy the UK or US version. **9/10**

THE ADDAMS FAMILY (JAP/US/UK)
Ocean, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 82%
Not the last word in platform games, but still a polished and enjoyable romp. A large game, featuring well-integrated adventure, puzzle and shoot-'em-up elements, providing an addictive challenge that gets very frustrating in places, although a password system allows for quick completion. **8/10**

AGURI SUZUKI F1 SUPER DRIVING (JAP)
LOZC, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players

Fast, 3D Mode 7 courses *and* tunnels and bridges? This game is extremely well presented, but suffers from the unfortunate no-warning-of-corners problem that seems to plague so many SNES driving games. If you can live with that, however, the split-screen two-player mode is a definite added bonus. **7/10**

AIR MANAGER (JAP)
Koei, 8 Mbit + BB
1 to 4 players
Unfortunately unintelligible unless you're fluent in Japanese, this is a quite well presented business strategy thing along the lines of *Railroad Tycoon*. Nice Mode 7 intro. Impossible to judge. **?/10**

ARCANA (US)
Alternative name: Card Master (JAP)
HAL, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player

An RPG based around a 3D perspective (like *Dungeon Master*) sounds good, but it suffers from a very plodding pace – the combat scenes are particularly long and drawn out. Graphically it's not bad, and the music is well done, but only really recommended for die-hard RPG fans. **6/10**

ASTRAL BOUT (JAP)
A-Wave, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
A wrestling/fighting game, and not a very good one at that. Graphically not a complete disaster, but the sprite collision and playability are very ropy. When you think you could buy *Street Fighter II* instead, what's the point? **4/10**

AUGUSTA MASTERS 3D GOLF (JAP)
T&E Soft, 8 Mbit + BB
1 to 4 players
The first 3D golf game on the Super Famicom, and still rather good despite Japanese text. Graphically, it's a mixture of bit-maps and polygons and it works quite well. The screen update could be faster, though. **8/10**

AXELAY (JAP/US/UK)
Konami, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP2 85%
Okay, so *Axelay*'s a little thin gameplay-wise. But – ooh! – those graphics! They're possibly the most impressive ones ever! There are also some mind-boggling baddies, and the game alternates between neat horizontal and vertical scrolling. **8/10**

BART'S NIGHTMARE (US)
Acclaim, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 91%
The formula may not sound promising – lots of little sub-games rather than one big one – but this is absolutely superb, and very weird. Wonderful graphics and lots of humour, and it's challenging. **9/10**

BATTLEBLAZE (JAP)
Sammy Corp, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
An awkward game that's nowhere near as good as its contemporaries (*Street Fighter II* and *Ranma 1/2*). The graphics are okay, the sound's okay, but the gameplay's dire. There's quite a reasonable range of moves, but you could do much better. **5/10**

BATTLE CLASH (US)
Nintendo, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP3 48%
This is the first stand-alone game released for the Super Scope. A shame that it's so short lived and awful. Cheaper than your average import, though. **4/10**

BATTLE GRAND PRIX (JAP)
Naxat, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
Remember *Super Sprint*, the coin-op? Well, imagine a version of it (ie an overhead view driving game) where you can only see a tiny area of the track around your car, and have to rely on little signals to warn you of corners. We had a bit of trouble with this one, eventually coming to the conclusion that it's 'challenging'. Lots of babes in it, though. **6/10**

BIG RUN (JAP)
Jaleco, 8 Mbit
1 player
After a promising start, the abysmal graphics and virtually non-existent gameplay make for what is surely the worst driving game on the system. (Nothing like the original coin-op.) **2/10**

BILL LAIMBEER'S COMBAT BASKETBALL (US)
Hudson Soft, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players
Originally an Amiga game called *Future Basketball*, this plodding speedball clone is a surprisingly poor release from Hudson Soft. **3/10**

BLAZEON (JAP/US)
Atlus, 8 Mbit
1 player
A tacky horizontal scroller with anime-style robots in. It's kinda different, but everything's so crude and jerky. That makes this game crap – there are so many better shoot-'em-ups to choose from. **3/10**

BOMBUZAL (JAP)
Alternative name: Ka-Blooey (US)
Kemco, 4 Mbit
1 player
You have to clear bombs from mazes of tiles by setting off chain reactions, without getting blown up yourself. The levels are well designed and it takes lots of skill to negotiate them. But unfortunately the graphics are extremely dreary, and the game's absolutely boring to play. Not recommended. **4/10**

BRASS BOSS (JAP)
Lazersoft, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP4 56%

Another *Street Fighter II* wannabe that doesn't make the grade. Some of the graphics are okay, and for the most part it plays all right, but *SF II* does it all so much better. **5/10**

CACOMA KNIGHT (JAP)
Datam, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP4 36%
A tedious variant of *Painter*, the ancient coin-op. It does it's best to brighten up proceedings with some special backdrops, but even they're not very good. **3/10**

CAMELTRY (JAP)
Alternative name: On The Ball (US)
Taito, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 52%
The idea of a rotating Mode 7 maze with a ball bouncing around it is a good one, but Taito haven't got the most from it. The levels are too easy to complete, and once you've seen them all you won't return. **5/10**

CAPTAIN TSUBASU 3 (JAP)
Tecmo, 8 Mbit + BB
1 or 2 players

Yikes! A Super Famicom football management game, based on a Japanese comic hero! There are some pretty dynamic match highlights, but unless you can read Japanese and have the patience of a elephant, stay away from this. Impossible to judge. **?/10**

CB WARS (JAP)
Banpresto, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
A strange anime scroll-along-and-whack-nasties-with-whatever-you-can-find type of game. RPG elements and lots of Japanese text render this a poor choice for most people. Impossible to judge. **?/10**

CHESSMASTER (US)
Mindscape, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players
You don't have much choice of SNES chess games. This plays a strong game (we, er, think), but there's room for improvement. It's awfully presented, and the tunes after each move are irritating. Check out that amazing menu! **5/10**

CHUCK ROCK (US)
Sony Imagesoft, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP4 61%

A competently put together Stone Age platform game, with lots of imagination and humorous touches, but ultimately it's all a bit bland and dull. **6**

COSMO GANG (JAP)
Namco, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP3 70%
A *Galaga*-style shoot-'em-up that doesn't match up to the ancient coin-op in the gameplay stakes. A fun two-player mode, and some lovely graphics and sound, but spoilt by infinite continues. **7**

DARIUS TWIN (JAP/US)
Taito, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
Lacking in levels for a *Darius* game – but this isn't all bad news. Good graphics, reasonable sound and not too much slow-down for an early title make it a reasonable buy, though it's not challenging enough in the first few levels. **7**

DAVID CRANE'S AMAZING TENNIS (US/JAP)
Absolute Entertainment, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP3 80%
At first this looks like the best tennis game yet. The 3D perspective works astonishingly well – until you take control of a player at the opposite end, that is. A restricted viewpoint makes it difficult to serve and return, meaning a split screen perspective would have worked better. It's good, but *Super Tennis* still rules. **8**

DESERT STRIKE (US/UK)
Electronic Arts, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP4 90%

An incredibly addictive chopper-based shoot-'em-up with helicopteriness pouring out of its ears. Exactly like flying round a desert blowing things up with missiles (only not quite so hot and sandy). **9**

D FORCE (JAP/US)
Asmik, 8 Mbit
1 player
An absolutely appalling shoot-'em-up with maybe the worst graphics, sound and playability on the SNES. Subtle use of Mode 7 gives the useless visuals a blocky appearance. Dreadful sound, too. Avoid! **2**

DINOSAURS (JAP)
Alternative name: Dino City (US)
Irem, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 83%
One of our favourite platform games, this has fab graphics, cute characters and plenty of amusing bits. But it's too easy to finish. We love it anyway. **8**

DIRTY CHALLENGER (JAP)
Yutaka, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
Yet another dire wrestling game. This time it includes some very dubious 'grapples' – you could be mistaken for thinking it was all a bit, well, dirty. **3**

DRAGON BALL Z (JAP)
Bandai, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player
The original Japanese *Dragon Ball* anime series has appeared on the 8-bit Famicom (NES), but this new version is the first available for the Super Famicom. Basically, an RPG with combat scenes and enough Japanese text to scare away the most persistent gamer. Extremely 8-bit in look too. Impossible to judge. **?**

DRAGON'S LAIR (UK)
Elite, 4 Mbit
1 player, SP1 82%
This looks absolutely gorgeous, plays well and is far better than the straight conversion of the coin-op that some other machines have suffered. But the frustrating difficulty level hides a game not as lengthy as it might have been. **8**

DRAGON QUEST V (JAP)
Enix, 12 Mbit + BB
1 player
The biggest selling game in Japan to date is a massive sprawling RPG crammed full of text boxes and, of course, plenty of Japanese text to be translated for an American release this year in the *Dragon Warrior* series. It's deceptively primitive looking, and extremely Japanese. Impossible to judge. **?**

DRAKKHEN (JAP/US/UK)
Kemco, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player, SP4 64%

Based on a French 16-bit computer RPG/adventure, this has reasonable graphics but an awful combat system. Most people will find this a real bore – even avid RPG fans – but if you *are* tempted, make sure you get the US or UK version. **6**

EARTHLIGHT (JAP)
Hudson Soft, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player
Based on a popular PC Engine game called *Nectaris*, this is an interplanetary space strategy affair, but there's enough Japanese in here to make it tricky to work out. Avoid. Impossible to judge. **?**

EXTRA INNINGS (US)
Alternative name: Ganba League Baseball (JAP)
Sony Imagesoft, 8 Mbit + BB
1 or 2 players, SP2 64%
Baseball's tricky to translate well to a games machine, but this probably makes the best job of it, with cute characters and slick action. If you really *must* have a baseball game, then go for this one. **6**

F-1 EXHAUST HEAT (JAP/UK)
Alternative names: F1 ROC (US), Ocean/Seta, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player, SP2 69%
Your car's a bit small, and you don't get much warning of corners. But at least you get a proper 3D view of the track. Not our favourite game,but some people just love it. **6**

FACEBALL 2000 (US)
Bullet-Proof Software, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP3 54%

On the Game Boy this 3D maze shoot-'em-up is pretty good fun, but the Super Nintendo conversion suffers badly. Slow, jerky 3D and confusing with two players. Not recommended. **5**

FATAL FURY (JAP)
Takara, 12 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP4 76%

One of a growing number of *Street Fighter II* look-a-likes, and probably the next best thing to The Big One. Looks okay, plays fine (though the controls are very awkward) and worth considering. **7**

FINAL FANTASY II (US)
Alternative name: Final Fantasy IV (JAP)
Square, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player
A strange one this, as in Japan it's the fourth in a very popular series. This is the first version to make it to the SNES, and while it's graphically basic, the lovely music and the involving nature of the quest lifts it way above lesser RPGs. **8**

FINAL FANTASY: MYSTIC QUEST (US)
Squaresoft, 4 Mbit + BB
1 player, SP3 79%
A spin-off younger players' version of the popular *Final Fantasy* RPG series that proves to be an enjoyable and involving quest for role playing beginners. Much cheaper than most releases, too. **7**

FINAL FIGHT (JAP/US/UK)
Capcom, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 86%
The best walking-along-beating-people-up game on the SNES. On the plus side are its brilliant graphics, varied opposition and devastating moves. On the minus side? Well, it lacks a two-player mode, and therefore tends to get a little dull in the long-term. **8**

FINAL FIGHT GUY (JAP)
Capcom, 8 Mbit
1 player
A pointless new version of *Final Fight* where the best character, Cody, gets the chop, and Guy replaces him. A poor game-music CD is included. The game is slightly easier than the original. **8**

FIRE DODGEBALL (JAP)
Sunsoft, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
A cute, anime version of a very weird game (see *SD Dodgeball* for details). The graphics are pretty good, but the game itself is a bit too simple to be particularly rewarding. The lengthy intro sequences before each game don't help, either. **6**

F-ZERO (JAP/US/UK)
Nintendo, 4 Mbit + BB
1 player, SP1 86%
A fabulous Mode 7 racing game. Dead fast and dead smooth. And dead deadly, if you don't watch out for the vicious computer-controlled hover cars. Bland scenery and an unlikely futuristic setting are unfortunate, but it's an impressive demonstration of just what the SNES can do. **8**

GEORGE FOREMAN'S KO BOXING (US)
Acclaim, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP2 18%
Boxing games are invariably awful – but this awful? **1**

GOLDEN FIGHTER (JAP)
Culture Brain, 12 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP1 42%
A very ropy *Street Fighter II* 'tribute'. The graphics are rubbish, the gameplay's rubbish, the sound's rubbish... One to avoid. **4**

GPX CYBER FORMULA (JAP)
Alternative name: Cyberspin (US)
Takara, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 70%
Another top-view scroller, and another case of yikes-was-that-a-corner? But this time, for a change, we've got anime characters racing in anime cars. And really smooth scrolling. Average. **6**

GRADIUS III (JAP/US)
Konami, 4 Mbit
1 player
Similar to the coin-op and – astonishingly – all packed onto a 4 meg cart, this is one to check out. It's an early title, so slow-down is a problem – it rather scuppers the otherwise beautiful graphics and powerful sound. Still, it's more impressive and playable than *Super R-Type*. **7**

GUNDAM F-91 (JAP)
Bandai, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player
A huge selling (in Japan at least) arcade/strategy game-thing, with Japanese text. Still it's playable if you are willing to persevere, but essentially this is one for real robot fans only. **6**

GUNFORCE (JAP/US)
Irem, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP4 59%

Similar to *Super Probotector* in many respects, but not half as good in any of

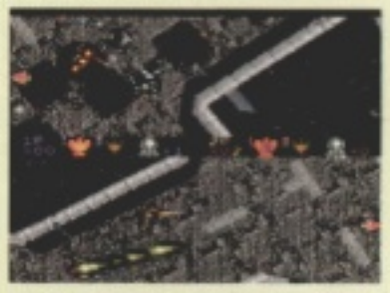
INDEPENDENT SUPER NINTENDO MAGAZINE

SUPER PLAY

TOP 5 SHOOT-'EM-UPS

There are hundreds and hundreds of brilliant shoot-'em-ups on the Super Nintendo (well, quite a few, anyway), and choosing the five best ones was quite a tall order, but here's what we came up with...

1 UN SQUADRON (91%)
The best all-round scrolling shoot-'em-up, with smart graphics and perfectly balanced gameplay. Great for aspiring 'Top Guns'.



2 SUPER PROBOTECTOR (90%)
Fast and deadly. Great with two-players, and there are some fab Mode 7 bits, too. Watch out for the somersault of death!

3 SUPER ALESTE (87%)
Tops as far as vertical scrollers are concerned, and a great demonstration of how much the SNES can handle at once graphics-wise.

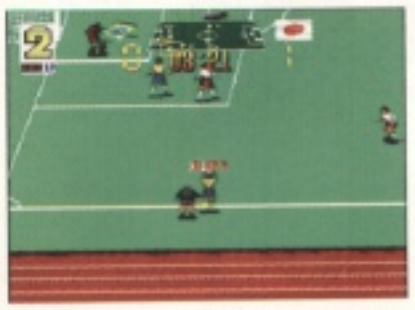
4 SUPER PARODIUS (86%)
It's a raised eyebrow a minute in Konami's distinctly weird (but hopelessly lovable) contribution. Just don't expect it to last you for very long, that's all.

5 SUPER SMASH TV (84%)
Hard core corpuscle redistribution. Not for the squeamish (or people who aren't very good at shoot-'em-ups). Fast, furious and frantically addictive.

them. The 'respects', that is. (Sorry, that was a bit confusing, wasn't it?)

6/10

HAT TRICK HERO (JAP)
Alternative name: Super Soccer Champ (US)
Taito, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players



A slick conversion of the coin-op *Football Champ*. It's incredibly fast, but rather too easy in one-player mode – you'll need to play a chum to have any fun. Not as good as *Super Soccer*.

7/10

HOLE-IN-ONE GOLF (JAP/US)
HAL, 8 Mbit
1 to 4 players
A fairly old game, but still one of the best golf sims available – what it lacks in technical ingenuity, it makes up for in simple pick-up-and-play user friendliness. The overhead view used isn't much like playing the real game, but nice Mode 7 course introductions help – as does turning the music off!

7/10

HOME ALONE (JAP/US/UK)
THQ, 4 Mbit
1 player, SP 36%
A dire attempt to cash in on the success of the movie. Hopeless graphics and sound do nothing to rescue the banal gameplay from the claws of drudgery and tedium. A waste of money.

3/10

HOME ALONE 2 (US)
THQ, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP3 32%

We actually preferred the first *Home Alone* game to this, but in the same way that we prefer *Eldorado* to *Santa Barbara*. Another dire scrolling effort that should be left on the shelf. Feeble and predictable.

3/10

HOOK (JAP/US)
Sony Imagesoft, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 72%
Slow-moving, but otherwise an attractive platformer that ties in with the film quite neatly. It's a bit easy to finish, though, so it'll be no, er, Peter Pan.

7/10

HUMAN GRAND PRIX (JAP)
Human, 8 Mbit + BB
1 or 2 players, SP4 82%
If you can live with the 'unique' control system, this is far and away the best Formula 1 game on the SNES. It's blindingly fast, with realistic handling and a useful two-player option.

8/10

HYPERZONE (JAP/US)
Hal, 8 Mbit
1 player
A poor 3D space shoot-'em-up using Mode 7, but with nothing else to recommend it. Tedium City is your only destination with this one.

3/10

THE IREM SKINS GAME (US)
Alternative name: Major Title (JAP)
Irem, 8 Mbit,
1 or 2 players, SP3 83%
Fans of the coin-op golf game *Major Title* will love this – it's virtually identical in every way. Fans of *Pebble Beach* and its cousins might not be that impressed by its accuracy, however.

8/10

JACK NICKLAUS GOLF (US)
Tradewest, 4 Mbit
1 to 4 players, SP3 62%
Fans of golf games that present things from just behind the player will like the look of this, but the painfully slow way it draws the screen before each shot, not to mention the could-be-better power meter, muck everything up. Not one of our favourites, but it will find its supporters.

6/10

JAMES BOND JR (US/UK)
THQ, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP3 29%
A platform and shooting action game from hell that even the Amstrad GX4000 wouldn't have tolerated. Poor graphics, feeble sound and banal game-play. Look, but don't touch. (On second thoughts, don't bother looking.)

2/10

JERRY BOY (JAP)
Alternative name: Smartball (US)
Sony Imagesoft, 8 Mbit
1 player
A run-of-the-mill platform game with only its blob-shaped hero to distinguish it from the crowd. Very average.

6/10

JOE AND MAC (JAP/US/UK)
Data East/Elite, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP1 72%

A good conversion of the original arcade machine, with a few bits missing, and a few more added. Graphically it's colourful, but the tunes don't vary and the gameplay becomes repetitive. Not much of challenge, but young players should enjoy it.

7/10

JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL (US)
Alternative name: Pro Football (JAP)
Electronic Arts, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players
What was a fab game on the Mega Drive and Amiga doesn't work on the SNES. Note the uninspiring graphics and really jerky scrolling. It is fast, but unfortunately at the expense of playability

5/10

JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL '93 (US/UK)
Electronic Arts, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP4 83%
...whereas this new, improved, updated version is loads better. The changes are mostly cosmetic, but they're enough to elevate the game to the status of 'recommended (if you like American football)'.

8/10

KICK OFF (UK)
Anco/Imagineer, 8 Mbit + BB
1 or 2 players, SP3 52%

The most controversial computer game ever gets its second conversion to the SNES, and suffers as a result. Not as bad as *Pro Soccer*, but still flawed playability-wise.

5/10

KING OF THE MONSTERS (JAP)
Takara, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
A fairly enjoyable Neo Geo game that seems to have been clumsily converted to the SNES. It's really too dull and unimpressive to get even fans of the original excited.

5/10

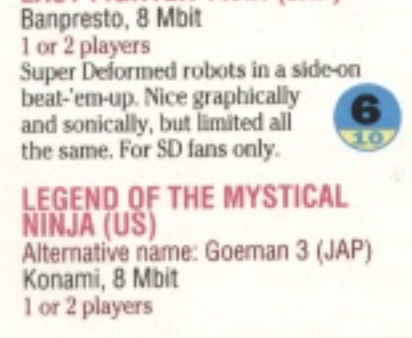
KOSHIYEN 2 (JAP)
KAC, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP2 70%
This would be the most bog standard baseball game except that it's very weird and very Japanese. Not bad, overall.

7/10

KRUSTY'S SUPER FUN HOUSE (US/UK)
Acclaim, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 79%
A curious blend of pie-throwing, puzzle-solving and platform action make this a refreshing challenge. Graphics and sound are reasonable, but it's the excellently paced gameplay that makes the game. Passwords should be given more regularly to reduce repetition though.

7/10

KUNIO KEN (JAP)
Technos, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players



An odd mix of beat-'em-up and adventure game. We had fun with it, beating people with pillows and suitcases, but we didn't have a clue what was going on as it's all in Japanese. You might be able to suss it out, but it got a lukewarm reception even in Japan.

?/10

LAGOON (JAP/US)
Kemco, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player
A fairly involving RPG, taking some elements from the *Zelda* series, but forgetting a lot of the more important ones – including a map, which can prove extremely irritating in certain areas. However, the graphics and sound are pleasant enough. Worth considering, but only after you've played *Zelda*, *Final Fantasy II* and *Soul Blazer*.

7/10

LAST FIGHTER TWIN (JAP)
Banpresto, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
Super Deformed robots in a side-on beat-'em-up. Nice graphically and sonically, but limited all the same. For SD fans only.

6/10

LEGEND OF THE MYSTICAL NINJA (US)
Alternative name: Goeman 3 (JAP)
Konami, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players

One of the best games for the system, mixing RPG adventure-style wandering with side-on platform action. Wonderful oriental music, beautiful graphics and an addictive challenge. Though the Jap version is accessible, buy the US cart to get the best value from this.

9/10

LEMMINGS (JAP/US/UK)
Sunsoft, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP2 86%
A hit on every format it's been released on. It takes a while to get to grips with, but *Lemmings* is one of the most original, ingenious and addictive games ever. Each level has a password, and there are loads of them (more than, for example, the Amiga version). A *Super Play* favourite, so you've really got to buy this.

8/10

MAGICAL GUY ADVENTURE (JAP)
Bandai, 4 Mbit
1 player
A jolly platform game combining wacky Japanese humour with cute sprites and backdrops. Not in the class of *Super Mario World*, but entertaining anyway.

6/10

MAGIC SWORD (JAP/US)
Capcom, 8 Mbit
1 player

Capcom's first disappointing release – not surprising when you consider how awful the original arcade game was. Instead of giving the conversion the *UN Squadron* treatment and improving the gameplay for the SNES version, the programmers have simply translated the original. A bodge job on the whole, with mixed quality graphics and bad slow-down.

6/10

MARIO PAINT (JAP/US)
Nintendo, 8 Mbit + BB
1 'player'
A painting and music package that's really only for youngsters. It's very basic (only 16 colours? On a system with thousands?) and once you've drawn something, what do you do with it? It's free with the Nintendo mouse – but wait until that's on sale separately.

3/10

METAL JACKET (JAP)
Atlus, 8 Mbit
1 player
A horrible experience. Atlus aren't doing themselves any favours attempting a platform game – a genre where you have to be really good to stand out. This is an *E-SWAT* clone with stilted animation, dire sound and inept gameplay.

2/10

MICKEY'S MAGICAL QUEST(JAP/US)
Capcom, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP3 89%
One of the most polished platformers around, though it's marred by the inclusion of infinite continues. Stunning backdrops, sprites and varied enough to impress anyone – it's just a shame it's too easy.

9/10

MUSYA (JAP)
Datam, 8 Mbit
1 player
One of the worst Super Famicom games ever – though it's up against stiff competition. Initially, the nicely shaded backdrops give it the look of a *Ninja Spirit* clone, but when you see your hero mince along and twiddle his stick, it palls.

3/10

NHLPA HOCKEY (US/UK)
Electronic Arts, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP4 87%

Not *quite* as good as the Mega Drive version (the graphics are a bit jerky, though you wouldn't notice unless you'd seen the original). Still a great ice hockey game, though, with loads of playability and atmosphere.

8/10

NOLAN RYAN'S BASEBALL (US)
Romstar, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP2 75%
Just as slick as *Extra Innings*, but without the cute characters, and it's slightly trickier to control. Still, not a bad game.

7/10

NORTH STAR KEN V (JAP)
Toei, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player
This addition to an inexplicably popular range of *Zelda*-style FRP's – it's based on *Fist Of The North Star*, believe it or not – looks, to the untrained British eye at least, like a big pile of steaming nob. If you speak Japanese it might, of course, be completely brilliant but we very much doubt it. Impossible to judge.

7/10

NORTH STAR KEN 6 (JAP)
Toei, 12 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP4 42%
'Massive sprites, massive sprites... er... massive sprites?' says Jason. What we think he means is that this has massive sprites but nothing much to actually do. Another failed *Street Fighter II*-a-like.

4/10

OTHELLO WORLD (JAP)
Tsukuda, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
Plays a strong game of *Othello* (if you set it to 'difficult'), looks good, and has some cute touches. But why would anyone want to spend $40 on a cartridge that plays *Othello*? Fine for brushing up your technique, but otherwise very sad indeed.

6/10

OUT OF THIS WORLD (US)
Alternative names: Outer World (JAP), Another World (UK)
Interplay, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 81%

The graphics in this one are superb – playing it is just like watching a film. The action is varied, and there are lots of great cinema-style close-up shots, but there isn't enough there to make it a classic.

8/10

PAPER BOY 2 (US/UK)
Mindscape, 4 Mbit
1 player, SP2 29%
In this game you're a newspaper delivery boy (or girl) and the object is to cycle along, er, delivering newspapers. There are some obstacles to avoid, things to hit with papers for bonus points, and that's about it. It's horribly boring, and really can't be recommended.

2/10

PARODIUS (JAP)
Konami, 8 Mbit
1 player
A brilliant conversion of the coin-op, and one that easily ranks as the best of Konami's recent string of classics for the SNES. Superbly colourful sprites, a hilarious sense of the bizarre, and some excellent music are just the icing on the cake. Hugely enjoyable (though a little easy).

9/10

PEBBLE BEACH GOLF LINKS (JAP/US)
T&E Soft, 8 Mbit + BB
1 to 4 players, SP3 82%
The third addition to the 3D golf series, and unsurprisingly very similar to the others. Accurate down to the waves on the beach, but the porn movie music is laughable.

8/10

PGA TOUR GOLF (JAP/US)
Electronic Arts, 4 Mbit
1 to 4 players, SP3 60%
Slick presentation, but it masks the fact that this is a poor SNES conversion of an otherwise excellent sports game. On other systems *PGA Tour* is *the* golf sim, but here EA's lack of SNES expertise scuppers things. Still, you could do worse.

6/10

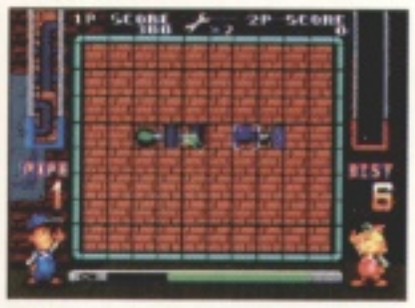
PHALANX (JAP/US)
Kemco, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 70%
Horizontally scrolling shoot-'em-ups are two a penny on the Super Nintendo, and a new contender really has to do something different to stand out. This one has some decent graphics and challenging gameplay, but at the end of the day is pretty forgettable.

7/10

PILOTWINGS (JAP/US/UK)
Nintendo, 4 Mbit
1 player, SP1 92%
SNES-owning aviation fans aren't spoilt for choice at present, but this should be

enough to, er, spin their propellers for now. It has a huge range of flying machines (from parachutes to helicopters), and super-smooth 3D graphics, and there's even a decent game in there, too. 9/10

PIPEDREAM (JAP)
Bullet-Proof Software, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP2 66%



A well turned-out puzzle game where you've got to link different shaped bits of pipe. Okay, but it gets boring without ever being that exciting to start with. 6/10

PITFIGHTER (US/UK)
THQ, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP4 14%
An appalling conversion of a popular coin-op. Dire graphics and awful gameplay. The pits. 1/10

POPULOUS (JAP/UK/UK)
Imagineer, 4 Mbit + BB
1 player, SP2 85%
The original Japanese version of a classic UK game that puts you in the shoes of God Almighty himself. A smashing game, though it *can* get frustrating (and quite boring) eventually. 8/10

POWER ATHLETE (JAP)
Kaneco, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP4 49%
Another attempt to cash in on *Street Fighter II* that doesn't really work. 'Crap – but in a groovy kind of way', apparently. 5/10

PRINCE OF PERSIA (JAP/US)
NCS, 8 Mbit
1 player
A superb conversion of the computer classic with new graphics, a brilliant intro and a fab *Lawrence Of Arabia*-style soundtrack. Not an easy game, but the password system allows progression without too much trouble. A classic. 9/10

PRO SOCCER (JAP)
Alternative name: World League Soccer (US)
Imagineer, 4 Mbit + BB
1 or 2 players
A really shaky conversion of *Kick Off*, with crude graphics and hopeless gameplay. 3/10

PUSHOVER (UK)
Ocean, 4 Mbit
1 player, SP3 78%
An enjoyable domino toppling-style puzzle game, converted from home computers, with lots of short-term fun. Once all 100 levels are completed, however, it's unlikely you'll ever return to it. 7/10

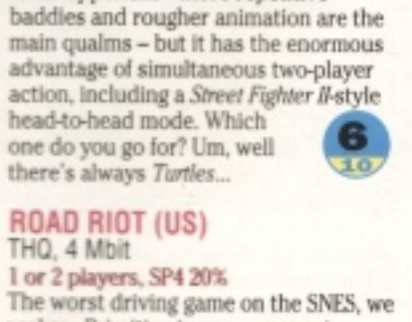
Q*BERT 3 (US)
NTVIC, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP3 67%
Real nostalgia value, as players of the 10-year-old coin-op will confirm. And plenty of effort's gone into making it look the part. But *Q*Bert 3* is never more than mildly amusing. 6/10

RACE DRIVIN' (US/UK)
THQ, 4 Mbit
1 player, SP3 35%

Fans of the original coin-op will be horrified by this driving game. 3D polygons and the SNES go together like, um, chips and custard. Poor programming on unsuitable hardware. 3/10

RAIDEN DENSETSU (JAP)
Alternative name: Raiden Trad (US)
Toei, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
A great game on the PC Engine and Mega Drive, but slow on the SNES and not recommended. It should have been a good game – but the programmers were too inexperienced on the machine to do the job properly. 4/10

RAMPART (US)
Electronic Arts, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP2 79%



So primitive-looking you wonder why it was allowed to live.*(Well, apart from the great 3D bit.) But a few minutes playing reveal a game that's actually fab fun, and two-player mode almost rivals *Mario Kart*. 8/10

RANMA 1/2 (JAP)
NCS Masiya, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
A neat one-on-one beat-'em-up with some very odd anime characters (who change sex when they get wet, and sometimes into giant pandas – don't worry, there's a Japanese TV series which explains it all). Mismatching of characters can be a problem, but on the whole it's great to look at and play. 8/10

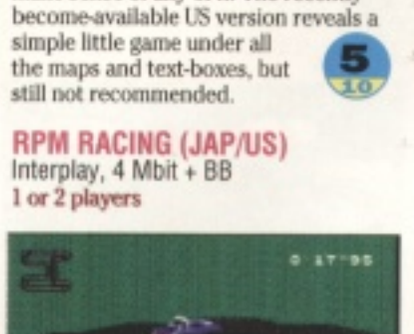
RIVAL TURF (JAP/US/UK)
Jaleco, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP2 58%
Final Fight's main rival. Not as 'together' as its opponent – more repetitive baddies and rougher animation are the main qualms – but it has the enormous advantage of simultaneous two-player action, including a *Street Fighter II*-style head-to-head mode. Which one do you go for? Um, well there's always *Turtles*... 6/10

ROAD RIOT (US)
THQ, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP4 20%
The worst driving game on the SNES, we reckon. Primitive in every respect, despite a split-screen two-player mode, and absolutely no fun at all. 2/10

ROAD RUNNER: DEATH VALLEY RALLY (US)
Sunsoft, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP4 42%
The atmosphere of the cartoon is captured perfectly, with wonderful cartoony graphics and hilarious intro and outro sequences, but the game itself stinks – it's just a simplistic, poorly-executed platform game. For *Road Runner* die-hards only. 4/10

THE ROCKETEER (JAP/US)
IGS, 8 Mbit
1 player
Lovely graphics, but that's about it. It consists of watching a string of mini-games in which you don't really get much say – it's just luck if you proceed from one game to the next. Awful. 3/10

ROBOCOP 3 (US/UK)
Ocean, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP2 66%



A neat *'Robocop'* feel, but gameplay-wise this is severely wanting. It's frustratingly difficult, and perseverance is rewarded by an unimaginative shooter with little connection to the film. 5/10

ROGER CLEMENS' MVP BASEBALL (US)
Acclaim, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP2 73%
Baseball games don't come much better presented than this. Fab animation and action viewed through different camera angles make this thoroughly enjoyable. 7/10

ROMANCE OF THE THREE KINGDOMS II (JAP/US)
Koei, 8 Mbit + BB
1-12 players
Loads of interlocking ancient Chinese kingdoms make alliances, split up, then make other alliances, lots of people (presumably) get killed, and we can't make sense of any of it. The recently-become-available US version reveals a simple little game under all the maps and text-boxes, but still not recommended. 5/10

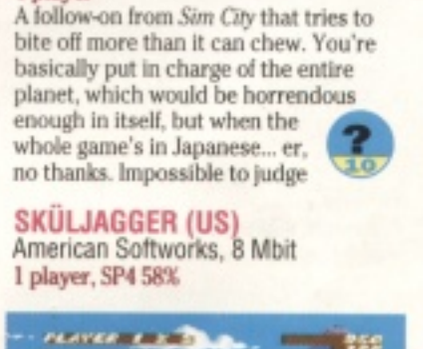
RPM RACING (JAP/US)
Interplay, 4 Mbit + BB
1 or 2 players

RPM stands, in this case, for Radical Psycho Machines – ridiculous trucks with big tyres that fascinate Americans. The scrolling's rough, you need clairvoyant powers to anticipate corners, and it uses flickery interlace graphics to no obvious effect. But good fun. 6/10

SD DODGEBALL (JAP)
Banpresto, 8 Mbit + BB
1 or 2 players
Based on an imaginary sport which involves knocking out the opposing team by throwing the ball at them, this is one of a series of Dodgeball games (*Fire Dodgeball's* another) and the worst. 5/10

SD GREAT BATTLE (JAP)
Banpresto, 6 Mbit
1 player
Japan's hugely popular Super Deformer series has spawned a lot of Super Famicom spin-off games, and they sell well, no matter how cruddy they are! This was the first to emerge, and isn't anything to get excited about, being a crusty old arcade adventure with tedious gameplay. You have been warned! 4/10

SD GUNDAM (JAP)
Bandai, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player



Again we head off to Japanese RPG-land, this variant starring a 'Super Deformed' (ie squished and cutified) version of *Gundam*, the most popular 'mecha' robot character in Japan. The format is traditional Japanese RPG, but the crappy graphics and sound and use of Japanese text make it unplayable. Impossible to judge. ?/10

SIM CITY (JAP/US/UK)
Maxis/Nintendo, 4 Mbit + BB
1 player, SP1 84%
Build the city of your dreams... then bring it to its knees! The SNES version of this all-time great is probably the best yet (even more user-friendly) although it hardly pushes the machine to its limits. Addictive, in the short-term. 8/10

SIM EARTH (JAP)
Imagineer, 6 Mbit + BB
1 player
A follow-on from *Sim City* that tries to bite off more than it can chew. You're basically put in charge of the entire planet, which would be horrendous enough in itself, but when the whole game's in Japanese... er, no thanks. Impossible to judge ?/10

SKÜLJAGGER (US)
American Softworks, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP4 58%

A lacklustre piratic platform game that's very easy and not going to take you long to finish. Very weird bubble gum bits. 5/10

SONIC BLAST MAN (JAP)
Taito, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP2 69%
A scrolling beat-'em-up with a niftier central character than most – he's a superhero with a deadly line in punches. It's a beat-'em-up nonetheless, though, and consequently gets pretty dull. 7/10

SOUL BLAZER (US)
Alternative title: Soul Blader (JAP)
Enix, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player, SP2 89%
Slick, graphically gorgeous and not entirely unlike *Zelda* (ie an RPG, Japanese-style). Avoid *Soul Blader*, the Japanese version (unless you're Japanese). 8/10

SPACE FOOTBALL (US)
Alternative name: Super Linearball (JAP)
Triffix, 4 Mbit
1 player
If you've played *Ballblazer* on the Commodore 64 before, that's probably the closest to this – football, played between two 'things' on a fast, 3D scrolling pitch. It's an idea that provides lots of thrills in the short-term, but it isn't really enough to justify splashing out this much loot on a game. 6/10

INDEPENDENT SUPER NINTENDO MAGAZINE

SUPER PLAY

TOP 5 GAME CHARACTERS

Game characters – they put the character into games. Where would *Mario Kart* be without Mario, or *Mickey's Magical Quest* without Mickey? We put our heads together to select our faves...

1 MARIO
He's done so much for the Super Nintendo cause that he's just *got* to be number one.

2 CHUN LI
All the *Street Fighter II* gang are great, but which one's best? We took a vote on it.

3 LINK
The man who does all the work while Zelda gets her name all over the packaging. Typical, eh?

4 DONATELLO
(Out of the *Turtles*.) The unsung hero-in-a-half-shell, with a brilliant mind and a big stick.

5 VANNA WHITE
The glamorous star of the 'top' game show adaptation. Nice teeth, shame about the game.

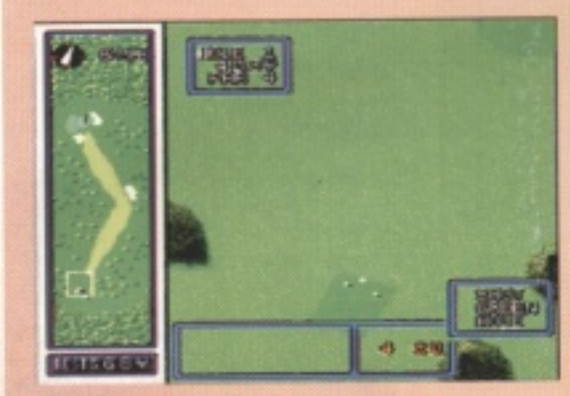
INDEPENDENT SUPER NINTENDO MAGAZINE
SUPER PLAY

TOP 5 GOLF GAMES

If it's a game of golf you're after, you'll be wanting a golf game. We're still waiting for that definitive, completely brilliant Super Nintendo version of the sport, but there are lots of really good ones to choose from in the meantime. Here are the five that teed us off the least...

1 THE IREM SKINS GAME (83%)
Not quite perfect, but generally agreed to be the best golf game around. Great graphics.

2 PEBBLE BEACH GOLF LINKS (82%)
One of a set of three golf games, with accurate courses, good gameplay, but slow graphics.



3 HOLE-IN-ONE GOLF (79%)
The bird's-eye view gives this more an arcade game feel, but it hasn't got much atmosphere.

4 SUPER BIRDIE RUSH (76%)
Very similar to *Hole-In-One*, but with more of a Japanese slant (lots of incomprehensible text).

5 JACK NICKLAUS GOLF (62%)
Well constructed and nice to look at, but the screen update is unbearably slow.

SPANKY'S QUEST (JAP/US)
Natsume, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players

A monkey called Spanky? Bouncing bubbles? You just wander round lots of similar-looking screens, killing baddies (with the bubbles) and collecting keys. Boring. **5/10**

SPIDERMAN & THE X-MEN (US/UK)
Acclaim, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP3 72%
A multi-character platform romp that loses its appeal fairly quickly. Plain and unattractive graphics are the order of the day, only saved by some really imaginative music. Fun for a while, but somehow it looks dated already. **7/10**

SPINDIZZY WORLDS (JAP/US/UK)
Ascii, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP2 69%
Spindizzy's sparkle seems to have dulled a little since its heyday on the Spectrum, partly thanks to the game's shift of emphasis from exploration to puzzle solving. A neat little thing all the same. **6/10**

STREET FIGHTER II (JAP/US/UK)
Capcom, 16 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP1 94%
This is the game that's selling Super NES' by the bucket- load. It's 'streets' ahead of other beat-'em-ups, and a near-perfect conversion of the popular coin-op. A must buy, though very expensive on official release. **9/10**

STRIKE GUNNER (JAP/US/UK)
Athena, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP3 65%
Another average vertical blaster, with poor and unvaried backdrops, but reasonable sprites and some nice explosions. A dull game that only gets interesting in two-player mode.. **6/10**

SUPER ADVENTURE ISLAND (JAP/US/UK)
Hudson Soft, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP2 75%

Simplistic, *Wonderboy*-style gameplay abounds in this third instalment of the series made popular on the NES. Aside from the ugly Master Higgins, the colourful backgrounds and impressive Yuzo Koshiro dance tunes make this an attractive game. However, infinite continues mean this *is* a short-lived experience. **7/10**

SUPER ALESTE (JAP/UK)
Alternative name: Space Megaforce (US)
Toho/Compile, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP3 87%
Evidence that the SNES can handle a manically busy *Gunhed*-style shooter with ease. Fab sprite handling (coupled with Mode 7) and no slow-down mean it's more a technical achievement than particularly well designed, and it's a bit weapon-crazy. But an excellent buy. **8/10**

SUPER BASEBALL SIMULATOR 1,000 (JAP/US)
Culture Brain, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP2 49%
Another middling baseball game. The pitching and batting are both quite good, but the fielders are a bit uncooperative and the graphics scrappy, with lots of superfluous Mode 7 whizzing-in-and-out. The music's good, though. **4/10**

SUPER BASES LOADED (US)
Alternative name: Super Professional Baseball (JAP)
Jaleco, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP2 55%
This all works okay, but it's just as limited in scope as other baseball games on the SNES, and the graphics are jerky. **5/10**

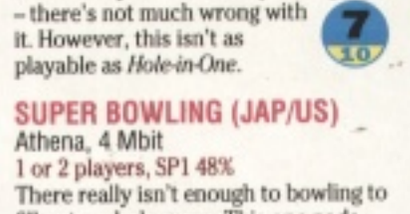
SUPER BASES LOADED II (US)
Alternative name: Super Professional Baseball II (JAP)
Jaleco, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP2 69%
Extraordinarily and uncannily similar to *Super Bases Loaded I*. (See above.) **6/10**

SUPER BASKETBALL (UK)
Alternative names: NCAA Basketball (US), Super Dunkshot (JAP)
HAL, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP4 84%

Famous for its 3D graphics – the pitch spins around and zooms in and out impressively. Brilliant sound effects, too. And it plays a splendid game of basketball. Slow at times, and a little confusing, but on the whole, great. **8/10**

SUPER BATTLETANK (US)
Absolute, 4 Mbit
1 player
The prehistoric *Battlezone* coin-op gets a new lease of life in this Gulf War tank game. It looks livelier than the wire-frame graphics of the original, and has some good explosions and exciting link sequences, but, quite frankly, it's still boring. **5/10**

SUPER BIRDIE RUSH (JAP)
Data East, 8 Mbit + BB
1 or 2 players, SP3 76%



A cute cartoony-looking golf game with some nicely drawn fairways and greens – there's not much wrong with it. However, this isn't as playable as *Hole-in-One*. **7/10**

SUPER BOWLING (JAP/US)
Athena, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP1 48%
There really isn't enough to bowling to fill out a whole game. This one pads itself out with neat graphical interludes and so on, but the real thing's so much more fun. (And much cheaper.) **4/10**

SUPER CASTLEVANIA IV (JAP/US/UK)
Konami, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 91%
A huge, sprawling sequel to the NES games. After a dull start this turns into one of the best platform games ever. More action is needed, but superb parallax and incredible sound-tracks generate an atmosphere appreciated by serious gamers. **9/10**

SUPER CHINESE WORLD (JAP)
Culture Brain, 8 Mbit
1 player
A sequel to the popular 8-bit Famicom game *Little Ninja Bros*. The overhead viewpoint changes at regular intervals for combat. Cutish but rather basic and primitive, with loads of Japanese text. Impossible to judge. **?/10**

SUPER CUP SOCCER (JAP)
Jaleco, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
A rival to *Super Soccer*? Not really. This takes a side-on, jerkily scrolling viewpoint and isn't going to impress anyone. That's a shame, because it goes into lots of detail – moves and rules-wise – and there are some nice graphical touches. **6/10**

SUPER DOUBLE DRAGON (JAP/US)
Technos, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, 68%

A wide variety of moves, and some very satisfying thumping and kicking action, inject a bit of life into a deceptively crappy looking beat-'em-up. Enjoyable, but a bit easy and rather '8-bit' all round. **7/10**

SUPER EDF (JAP/US)
Jaleco, 8 Mbit
1 player
A pretty, horizontally scrolling effort, but with some boring and unchallenging gameplay. Similar to the coin-op it's based on, *EDF* has some well drawn backdrops and sprites. But the music is bland, and slow-down spoils the action. **6/10**

SUPER F1 CIRCUS (JAP)
Nichibutsu, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player, SP1 83%
This looks ordinary, but is one of the few overhead-view racing games that works. Fast, with a good 'driving feel' and plenty of options to cater for the long-term player. Recommended. **7/10**

SUPER F1 GRAND PRIX (JAP)
Video System Co, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player
Nothing to do with the popular Amiga *F1 Grand Prix*, this is along the same lines as *Battle Grand Prix*, without the split-screen two-player mode. That means you get to see more of the track on-screen, and hence slightly more warning of corners coming up, but not much. It's a matter of taste, and very difficult. **5/10**

SUPER FIRE PRO WRESTLING (JAP)
Human, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players

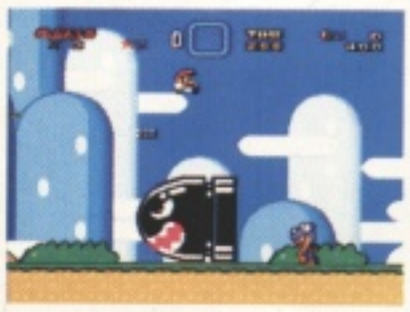
Nowhere near as smart-looking as *WWF*, but a much more challenging game (the 20 available wrestlers each behave differently, for a start). But in one-player mode it's virtually impossible to beat the computer. Okay, if you can live with the dull visuals and manage to haul in a friend. **6/10**

SUPER GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS (JAP/US/UK)
Capcom, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP2 85%
Another sequel, unique to the Super Nintendo. It's got some brilliant graphics (with loads of slow-down) and some nice tunes, but it's very tough – and, as it lacks battery back-up or passwords, it can be very frustrating. The huge levels only have a few restart points, too. Well put together, but difficult. **8/10**

SUPER MARIO KART (JAP/US/UK)
Nintendo, 4 Mbit + BB
1 or 2 players, SP1 93%

It's... It's... words fail us. The best driving game ever, the best two-player game ever, and possibly the best, well, game ever. It's perfect. It's four brilliant games in one: there's the Grand Prix game, the Time Trial, the two-player Head to Head, and the amazing balloon game. **9/10**

SUPER MARIO WORLD (JAP/US/UK)
Nintendo, 4 Mbit + BB
1 player, SP2 94%



What more can we say about this huge game? On the downside, the backgrounds become repetitive, but apart from that it's a gameplayer's dream come true – you'll want to spend weeks discovering every secret bit. Though real *Mario* aficionados tend to prefer Mario's third trip, this remains (along with *Zelda*) Nintendo's flagship game. **9/10**

SUPER NBA BASKETBALL (JAP)
Tecmo, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP4 86%
While *Super Basketball/Super Dunkshot* is the basketball game to go for if you want to wow your friends, this one is a bit more playable, accurate and comprehensive. **8/10**

SUPER NINJA (JAP)
Koei, 12 Mbit + BB
1 player
You'd never know this was 12 meg – it has all the flat colours, simple graphics and laughable animation of an early NES game. It uses the same overhead view as *Zelda* et al, but being Japanese proves impossible to play. (Some loss.) Impossible to judge. **?/10**

SUPER OFF ROAD (JAP/US)
Trade West, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players
Another overhead view driving game but we're allowed to see the whole track for once (phew). We're racing monster trucks with a 3D(ish) perspective. The trucks look great bouncing round the course, and in the short-term it's good fun. And great music. **7/10**

SUPER PANG (JAP)
Alternative name: Super Buster Bros (US)
Capcom, 4 Mbit
1 player, SP1 72%

The arcade original was a fantastic game, but one that allowed two people to pop bubbles at once. This is a good conversion, with smart graphics and plenty of speed, but unfortunately only one can play, and that gets boring. **7/10**

SUPER PLAY ACTION FOOTBALL (US)
Nintendo, 4Mbit + BB
1 or 2 players, SP2 71%
A faithful implementation of American football that'll please fans, but not the *John Madden*-basher we've been waiting for. Not a patch on *Madden '93*... **7/10**

SUPER PROBOTECTOR (UK)
Alternative names: Contra 3 (US)/Contra Spirits (JAP)
Konami, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP2 90%
The best platform shoot-'em-up around. Superb use of Mode 7 and an amazing sound-track put this in the super league. Brill two-player action makes it essential stuff. **9/10**

SUPER R-TYPE (JAP/US/UK)
Irem, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 72%
Beautifully designed baddies, and some of the best graphics on the SNES, make this one of the best-looking shooters around. Not perfect, thanks to jerky scrolling, terrible slow-down and no restart points. It also lacks the best parts of the coin-op – *R-Type II*; surprisingly, not the original game – on which it's based. **7/10**

SUPER SHANGHAI (JAP)
Hot B, 8 Mbit
1 player
It's hard to see what's 'super' about it, other than a show-offy intro and the odd silly sound effect, but as a version of *Shanghai*, the puzzle game, it works. Relaxing and compulsive, but not great. **6/10**

SUPER SMASH TV (JAP/US/UK)
Acclaim, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP1 84%
A translation of the ultra-violent coin-op, this is incredibly good short-term fun. No slow-down, plenty of tough bits and bags of addictiveness – you'll keep coming back to it. Recommended. **8/10**

SUPER SOCCER (US/UK)
Alternative name: Super Formation Soccer (JAP)
Human/Nintendo, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP1 83%
This is probably the closest you'll get to real footy on the SNES. Impressive 3D graphics, and jolly good fun to play. But it doesn't really feel much like football as such, perhaps because the rules have been messed around a bit. We're still waiting for the SNES' equivalent of *Sensible Soccer*. **8/10**

SUPER STAR WARS (JAP/US)
JVC, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP4 89%

The music is the first thing that hits you – a perfect rendition of all the best tunes from the film – followed by the fantastic *Star Warsy* feel that pervades the whole thing. If you loved the film, you'll love this too. (Oh, and it's great fun to play, too.) **9/10**

SUPER TENNIS (JAP/US/UK)
Tonkin House, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP1 92%

One of the best tennis games on any machine (only rivalled by two fab tennis games on the PC Engine). The range of shots available is amazing. It's not all bashing a ball backwards and forwards, either – there's a comprehensive line-up of tournaments and things to enter, too. Brilliant. **9/10**

SUPER VALLIS (JAP)
Telenet, 8 Mbit
1 player
A conversion of the PC Engine CD ROM game, featuring the exploits of lots of Japanese girly characters but absolutely no excitement. It's far too contrived, boring and linear to bother with. **5/10**

SUPER WAGAN ISLAND (JAP)
Namcot, 8 Mbit
1 player

Funny, with cute graphics and likeable characters, this is a semi-arcade, semi-text-based adventure for the younger player – we got a fair way into it without understanding what was going on. (It's all in Japanese!) Impossible to judge. **?/10**

SUPER WWF (JAP/US/UK)
Acclaim, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP1 74%
Marvellous graphics, and enormous fun to play – short-term. But, all the different wrestlers behave exactly the same. And there's no tournament system like on other versions, either – you win or lose a fight and that's it. *WWF* can't be recommended. **7/10**

SYLVALION (JAP)
Toshiba EMI, 8 Mbit
1 player
An odd maze-based scrolling shoot-'em-up where you guide a dragon down baddy-infested passages. It looks tacky but is actually quite good. Not much of a challenge, though, and not one you'll return to. **6/10**

THUNDER SPIRITS (JAP/US)
Toshiba EMI, 8 Mbit
1 player

A conversion of the well respected Mega Drive game *Thunderforce 3*, but it isn't anywhere near as good on the SNES. Guess why? Yep, slow-down spoils the action! Everything else is very similar to the MD game – ie no effort has been made to use any of the special features that the SNES can offer – which results in rather a missed opportunity. **6/10**

TKO BOXING (US)
Alternative name: World Championship Boxing (JAP)
Sofel, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players
Boxing games are very difficult to pull off, and this is the kind of thing that tends to happen as a result. It's well presented, but the gameplay is ridiculously simplistic and gets boring quickly. Steer clear. **3/10**

TOP GEAR (US/UK)
Alternative name: Top Racer (JAP)
Kemco, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP3 76%
So fast it'll make your eyes go squiffy. The screen is divided down the middle so two players can compete – just as well, as it's dull as a one-player game. The game was developed by Sheffield software house Gremlin, so fans of their *Lotus* games will be on familiar ground here. No smooth Mode 7 graphics or elaborate trackside detail, just lots of driving fun. Not in the same league as *Mario Kart* all the same. **7/10**

TURTLES IV: TURTLES IN TIME (JAP/US/UK)
Konami, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP2 84%

The Turtles themselves might long since have handed over their cult status to the current craze, but that doesn't alter the fact that this is a very good beat-'em-up. Superb graphics, some clever characterisation, frantic gameplay, and a terrific assortment of different levels means plenty of fun. On the downside, it doesn't take long to become repetitive, and only slightly longer to finish. **8/10**

ULTIMATE FOOTBALL (JAP)
Sammy, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
American football – what a ridiculous sport, eh? Still, that needn't prevent *Ultimate Football* from being a decent game. The problem is that this is so limited in both scope and technical merit that it can't really be recommended to anyone except real footy fans. **6/10**

ULTRAMAN (JAP/US/UK)
Bandai, 8 Mbit
1 player
At first it's laughable: a ridiculous-looking giant superhero beating up monsters that are every inch like people dressed up in rubber suits. But then you realise that's how it's actually meant to be. This is based on those dreadful Japanese disaster movies you occasionally see on Channel 4. Laughable. **4/10**

UN SQUADRON (US/UK)
Alternative name: Area 88 (JAP)
Capcom, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 91%
Brilliantly designed pseudo-conversion of the coin-op, and still one of the best games on the machine. Although it slows down in places, the action is still exciting. Sonically average, but graphically superb, and a *Super Play* favourite. **9/10**

VOLLEYBALL TWIN (JAP)
Tonkin House, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP4 76%

Volleyball from the people who brought us *Super Tennis*. The slow scrolling tends to knacker your chances of receiving the ball from time to time, but otherwise it plays pretty solidly (and the Beach Volley is something else). **7/10**

WAIALAE COUNTRY CLUB (JAP/US)
T & E Soft, 8 Mbit + BB
1 to 4 players
This is the second of three golf games all using the same programming and graphics (the other two being *Augusta Golf* and *Pebble Beach*) but all representing different courses. Accurately depicted and probably the best golf series on the Super Nintendo by far. **8/10**

WHEEL OF FORTUNE (US)
Gametek, 4 Mbit
1 to 2 players, SP2 19%
A tedious quiz-show conversion that shouldn't have happened at all. A guest appearance by Vanna White is perhaps the only reason we actually gave it a mark at all. **1/10**

WINGS II (US)
Alternative names: Sky Mission (JAP), Blazing Skies (UK)
Namco, 4 Mbit
1 player, SP2 71%
Not quite as impressive as the screen-shots (see *Super Play* issue 2) make it out to be, but still an undeniably attractive and atmospheric World War I game. It's also the only Super Nintendo flight sim where you can actually shoot things. **8/10**

XANDRA'S BIG ADVENTURE (JAP)
Namcot, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 88%

An obscure platform game that ought to be better known. Versatile and very unusual, with a great central character, and the gameplay, though a bit patchy, is brilliant fun, despite all the Jap text. **8/10**

XARDION (JAP/US)
Asmik, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player
From the makers of *D Force* comes another disaster! This time it's an *E-SWAT* clone – you control a robot that must progress through different zones, each with a guardian. Sounds okay, but the dreadful graphics, awful sonics, and pathetic gameplay and structure ruin it. **4/10**

YS III (JAP/US)
Tonkin House, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player
Not as good as the prequel (*YS Books 1 & 2*) on the PC-Engine CD ROM, but still a top quality RPG. Instead of an overview of the landscape, you get a scrolling side-on perspective, and though it's not as big as the first two games, it's fun. **7/10**

ZAN II (JAP)
Wolf Team, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player
A pretty full-screen map view – and plenty of territory to conquer, but working out what else it boasts proves difficult. Another unintelligible-to-Brits war game. Impossible to judge. **?/10**

ZELDA: A LINK TO THE PAST (JAP/US/UK)
Nintendo, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player, SP2 93%

A brilliantly designed and implemented adventure that puts similar games to shame, in much the same way as *Mario* dominates the platform world – Nintendo's top programmer was involved in both games. *Zelda* addicts may complain it's not quite as long and drawn out as previous games. **9/10**

Don't forget, if a game's not in What Cart? write and tell us. Send the details with a short review to: *Super Play*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

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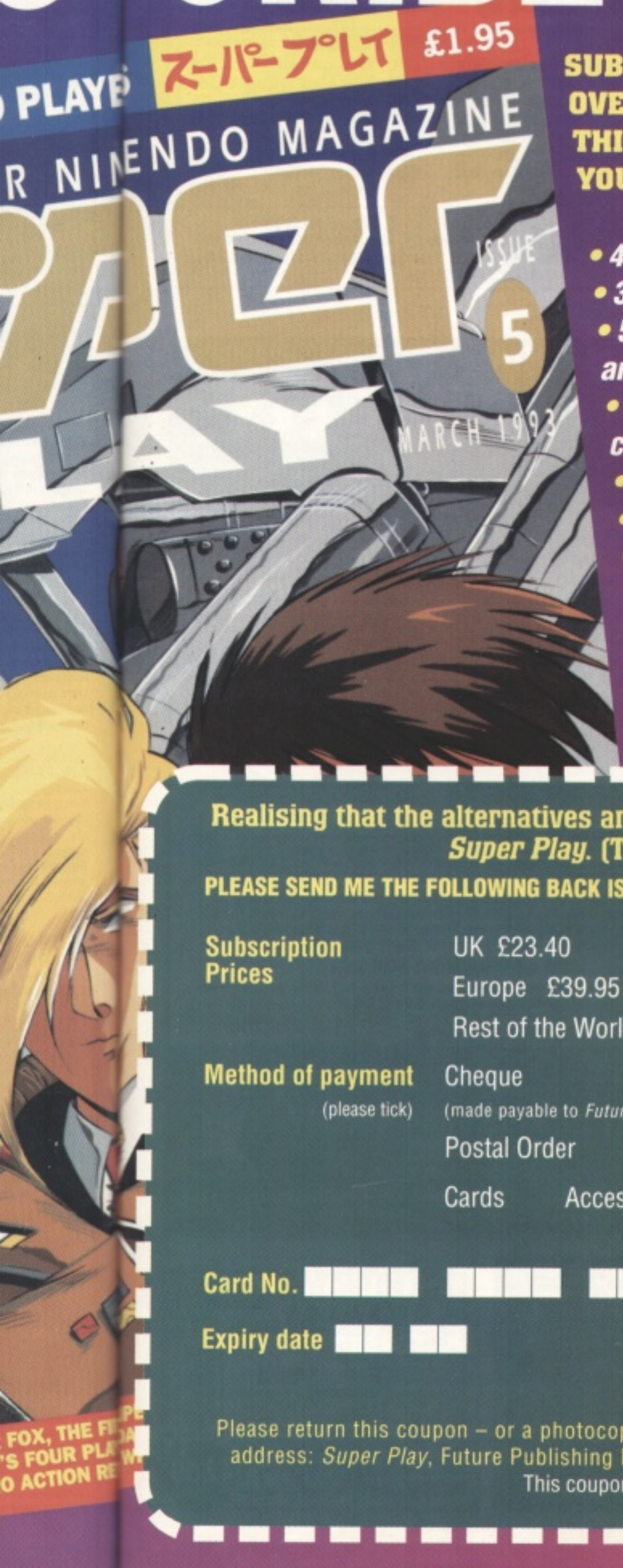

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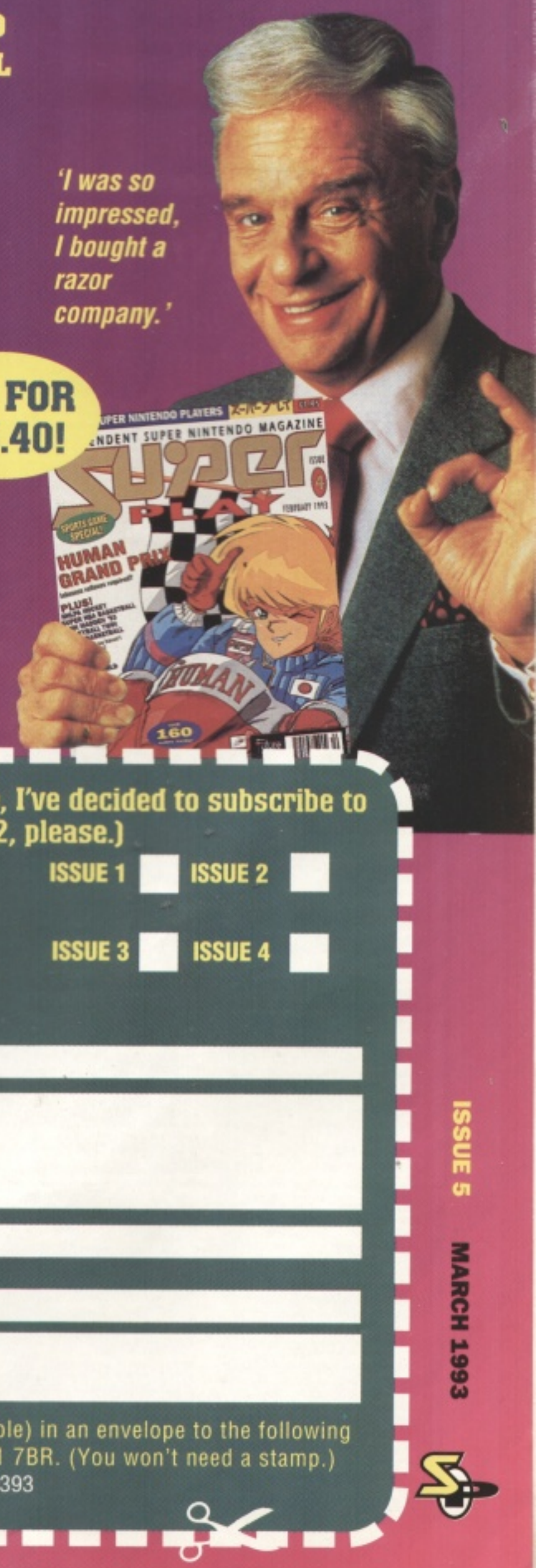

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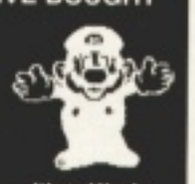

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NEW GAMES SPECIAL!

Following on from our Las Vegas show report this issue, next month we have a massive feature going into much more detail on all '93s new games. You can't miss out on this – it'll be the bee's knees!

JAPANESE GAMES – THE INSIDE STORY

We know we promised last month to send our man into Japan to unearth the secrets of the Japanese games industry. But, er, unfortunately he wasn't quite up to the job. In fact, last thing we knew he was desperately trying to explain himself to the night watchman at Nintendo HQ. So we got a new man. He's twice as tough as the last one, and carries twice as much kit. He can't possibly fail.

SUPER NINTENDO TROUBLESHOOTING

We look at all the things that can go wrong with your Super Nintendo, and how to fix them!

ALONG WITH... TOP TIPS!

The ultimate *Street Fighter II* guide. No, really, this time it is! Allen Brett, winner of the National Computer Games Championships of 1992, tells us everything there is to know about the game. As if that wasn't enough, he'll also be turning *Super Star Wars* inside out. Plus lots more tips and, of course, Ask Ade.

RIPPING REVIEWS!

The baddest baddies ever battle it out in *Alien vs Predator*, while you and three friends can do it in *Super Fire Pro Wrestling 2*. *Chester Cheetah* struts his stuff; *Ranma 1/2 Part 2* – is it better than Part 1?; *Super Flying Hero* (a shoot-'em-up); *Septentrion* (a top adventure from Human); *Ashibe* (it's a bit like *Bubble Ghost*); and *Super F1 Hero* – another contender for the top Formula 1 slot. Plus official reviews of *Mario Paint*, *Super SWIV*, *Warp Speed* and more!

CARTOGRAPHY

We do try not to throw jargon around too much, but occasionally the odd technical term still pops out. Here's what they all mean...

ACTION REPLAY: A special cart, made by Datel, that allows you to modify games (adding facilities like infinite lives or invincibility). See page 87 for ordering details.

ADAPTOR: These come in various forms, but their basic job is to allow software from one country to run on a Super Nintendo from another. (See 'grey import'.)

ANIME: (pronounced: ah-nee-may) The Japanese art of animation. In Japan, anime is everywhere, with its characters and style notably appearing in video games.

BATTERY BACK-UP (BB): Switch off a normal cart and all your hard work will disappear into electronic oblivion. Switch off one with battery back-up, however, and it'll keep all your high-scores and saved positions safely tucked away for another day.

BIT: A one or a zero. Stick lots of these together in the right order and you've got yourself a game. There are about eight million in the average cart.

CD ROM: A method for storing absolutely huge games on compact discs rather than cartridges. The Super Nintendo CD ROM drive is due to appear next year, and promises to be a world-beater.

-CHAN: An affectionate suffix, meaning 'dear', that's stuck onto the end of a name by the Japanese to describe its owner as cute. The recently developed habit of creating small, cute cartoon versions of otherwise 'serious' characters like Ultraman has results that are often described as -chans.

CPU: Central Processing Unit, the chip at the heart of any computer. In the case of the Super Nintendo it's a 65sc816 running at 3.58 MHz (sorry, this probably isn't helping much), and it's in charge of all the graphics and sound chips that make your console so fab.

DSP: Digital signal processor. An extra chip included in a cartridge to provide improved 3D graphics, notably used in *Pilotwings* and *Super Mario Kart*.

GAME BOY: Nintendo's black-and-white, battery-powered, hand-held console.

GREY IMPORT: Nintendo don't tend to release games in the UK until at least several months after they've appeared in Japan and the US. If you want to get hold of them any sooner, you'll have to hunt around for a grey import version. The mail order advertisements in this issue are the best place to start, but remember, to use an import cart on a UK machine you'll need to use a special adaptor that costs between £10-£20.

MBIT: Short for Megabit. A million bits.

MEGABYTE: 8 megabits – the average cart size.

MEGA DRIVE: (*Get outa town! – Ed.*)

MODE 7: A unique Super Nintendo feature that gives you 3D screen scaling and rotation.

NEO GEO: Hugely expensive console made by SNK that's in effect a portable arcade machine.

NES: Nintendo Entertainment System. The earlier, cruder console that came before the Super Nintendo. Rather like John the Baptist, in fact.

NTSC: The Japanese and American TV system. NTSC TVs are less flickery, running at 60Hz, but also less detailed, than UK ones, while NTSC machines run faster than PAL ones, and also use the full screen for the game image, without borders.

PAL: The 50Hz television system used in the UK. Unless you've bought an import machine, your Super Nintendo will use PAL, and will therefore plug straight into your telly's aerial socket. A foreign one won't, though, so make sure you've got a suitable SCART TV (see 'SCART') before buying one.

PAL BOOSTER: A piece of hardware that plugs into a Japanese or US Super Nintendo and allows the machine to be plugged into the aerial socket of an ordinary telly.

PARALLAX SCROLLING: The process where different parts of the background move at different speeds, giving the impression of depth.

PC ENGINE: Popular (in Japan, at least) games console made by NEC.

RPG: Role Playing Game. One of those weird games with wizards, orcs and action points in. Also occasionally called an FRP (Fantasy Role Playing game).

SCART: Posh TVs often have a SCART socket which cuts out a lot of the irrelevant electronics that deal with television programmes. If your telly's got one, plug your Super Nintendo into it for a better picture. (And if you've got an import machine, you'll *have* to plug it into the SCART socket.)

SCROLLING: Simply the process where the background moves across the screen, kind of like a movie camera panning.

SNES: Super Nintendo Entertainment System, aka Super Nintendo. The business.

SUPER SCOPE: The bazooka-shaped light gun for the SNES, which can now be bought with it.

SPRITE: Anything that moves around on the screen. Mario is a sprite.

SUPER DEFORMED (OR SD): A Japanese anime term. When a robot is super deformed, it's all squashed up, with big, cute eyes. Also see –chan.

SUPER FAMICOM: The Japanese name for the Super Nintendo.

SUPER FX CHIP: A new chip that'll be inserted into some carts from early next year, giving the games much improved 3D graphics capabilities.

TOTAL!: Our sister magazine, covering Game Boy and NES as well as Super Nintendo.

FREE GIFT!

We did it on issue 1! We did it at Christmas! And on issue 6 – yes! – we're doing it again! We're giving you a fabulous free gift! We can't tell you what it is yet, as we wouldn't want to ruin the surprise. But coming from *Super Play* you know it'll be something special.

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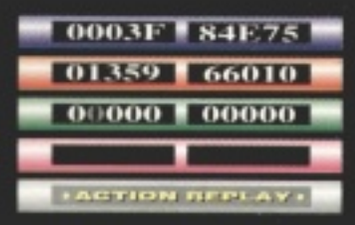

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